

The **KINGBIRD**



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The KINGBIRD

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Pages 1 - 52

CONTENTS

The January Waterfowl Counts: IV and V	Leo J. Tanghe	2
The Jamaica Bay Bird Sanctuary	Emanuel Levine	6
Warblers in Southern New York	Fritz Scheider	13
Suggestions for the Bird Watchers Library	Allen H. Benton	20
Field Notes:		
The White-headed Eagle Survey		22
Varied Thrush in Jefferson County		22
A Franklin's Gull in Spring Plumage at Oswego		23
Some Golden Eagles in New York		23
Unusual Song Sparrow Diet		24
Large Flights of Red Phalaropes on Long Island		24
A Partially Albino Chickadee		25
Hawk Owl in Jefferson County		25
A Note on the Roosting Behavior of the Brown Creeper		26
The Behavior Pattern of some Ruffed Grouse Chicks in Captivity (Part II) ..		26
Highlight of the Winter Season		
December 1 - March 31	James K. Merritt	27
Regional Reports for the Winter, 1958 - 1959		28

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THE JANUARY WATERFOWL COUNTS: IV AND V

LEO J. TANGHE

This year's report represents a belated effort to bring these waterfowl counts up to date with the inclusion of the 1958 data. Counts for previous years are given in the Kingbird: Volume 5, pages 34-6 (1955); Volume 6, pages 40-2 (1956) and Volume 7, pages 6-7 (1957). The value of these counts increases as the data accumulate.

After five years it is natural to examine these data for trends, especially with respect to the question "Is the total number of wintering waterfowl increasing or decreasing?" Following are the grand totals of wintering waterfowl of New York State for the past five years:

	Ground Count	Aerial Count
1955 -----	189,234	197,015*
1956 -----	222,408	238,768*
1957 -----	204,509	214,154
1958 -----	169,819	315,300
1959 -----	183,972	208,930

*Revised slightly from the numbers given in the Kingbird

The ground counts were made by the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, and the aerial counts by the New York State Conservation Department. 1958 gave the lowest, and 1959 the second lowest ground counts for the five year period. However, the aerial count for 1958 was the highest for the five year period, due mainly to an additional 100,000 Scaup Ducks in Long Island waters. No trend is discernible from these data.

Neither is any definite long term trend yet discernible for any individual species. To be sure, there are many instances where the count of a given species is greatly different, say more than double or less than half the count of the previous year. Such an instance is the Mute Swan, whose population on Long Island in 1959 is about double that of previous years. All such instances should be examined carefully in search for a plausible reason, such as weather and food supply in the wintering and breeding areas, hunting pressure, etc. Data covering at least ten years will probably be necessary to reveal any long term trends.

Except for 1958 there was surprisingly good agreement between the totals for the ground and aerial counts. However, when the totals were in reasonable agreement, there were usually discrepancies in the counts of certain species. The following interesting examples may be cited from a comparison of the 1959 ground and aerial counts. Details of the aerial counts were kindly supplied by Mr. Dirck Benson, Game Research Investigator for the Conservation Department of the State of New York.

The aerial count for Black Ducks on Long Island was about 10,000 higher than the ground count. Both counts showed Black Ducks around the entire periphery of the island, with biggest concentration in Jamaica Bay.

The aerial count for Mallards was about 2500 less than the ground count. In this case the Long Island aerial count was lower than, but in reasonable agreement with the ground count. The aerial count did not cover the Susquehanna and its tributaries, but a flock of 350 Mallards was seen by ground observers on the Chemango River near Oxford, N. Y. The aerial count

did include the Niagara River but did not report any Mallards. Buffalo ground observers reported 740 Mallards, about two thirds of which were on the Niagara River above the Falls.

The ground count of Redheads in the Finger Lake Region was 11,630, about twice the aerial count for that area, and about four times the average Redhead count for 1955 to 1958. Mrs. J. Southgate Y. Hoyt forwarded me the records from this area. Local observers reported 6360 Redheads on Jan 18, 1959, the major counts being 1500 on the East Short of Cayuga Lake, north to Union Springs, 740 on the West Shore of Cayuga Lake, north to Canoga, 3300 on Seneca Lake, and smaller numbers on Keuka and Canandaigua Lakes. On Jan 17, Mr. Fritz Scheider of Syracuse reported 5270 Redheads from the north end of Cayuga Lake, from Canoga on the West Shore to East Varick on the East Short. Mrs. Hoyt, commenting on the possibility of duplicate counts on the same birds, wrote as follows:

"Most of our groups were out on the 18th, but on the 17th Fritz Scheider worked around on the north end of Cayuga Lake, concentrating on the Canoga marshes on the west side, going in at six different places, on foot. I feel that the five or six thousand ducks he got there were different ducks from any of the others counted the next day, and that this is not duplication. However, since the ice-line changes from day to day in that area, and since the waterfowl do move around somewhat, I thought I should at least show his count separately, as a matter of interest. But you might as well use the totals, as I doubt if duplication would be more than 1000."

The aerial count for the Finger Lakes Region on Jan 23, 1959 showed 1050 Redheads on Canandaigua, 665 on Keuka, 2125 on Seneca, 845 on Cayuga north of Sheldrake, 400 on Cayuga south of Sheldrake, and 200 on Skaneateles Lake, for a total of 5285.

The aerial count on Oldsquaw was about 4000 less than the ground count. Mr. Bernard Nathan of Buffalo reported 2800 on the Niagara River below the Falls, but the birds escaped detection on the aerial survey.

The aerial count of Scoters was only 1367, whereas the ground count was over 13,000, mostly from Long Island.

In the above instances the ground counts were greater than the aerial counts. This situation was drastically reversed for the Brant where the ground count was only 2962 and the aerial count was 34,300. These were in large off-shore flocks along Long Island from South Oyster Bay to Jamaica Bay.

The reasons for some of the discrepancies are obvious; others may never be resolved. These instances have been presented to alert both ground and air observers in the future.

The instances of excellent agreement between ground and aerial counts are far more numerous than the occasional discrepancies.

Mr. Thomas Lesperance, reporting for Region 7, could find no waterfowl or open water in the Adirondack area. He pleaded for a later date for the count so that this magnificent area of our state would be represented in the Waterfowl Count. However, a later date would defeat the purpose of the count, which is to record wintering waterfowl.

In conclusion, may I extend by thanks to all observers who braved the winter elements to make this count possible.

852 Stone Road, Rochester 16

1958 New York State

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VIII	IX	X-a	X-b	Totals
Common Loon								1	19	165	185
Red-throated Loon									20	38	58
Red-necked Grebe					5				1	20	26
Horned Grebe			119		11	7			763	804	1704
Pied-billed Grebe			5		2			3	1	84	95
Mute Swan									1	311	312
Whistling Swan										3	3
Canada Goose			26		20				35	1917	1998
Brant									460	1963	2423
Snow Goose											
Mallard	153	12	375	364	481	47	13	238	169	2274	4126
Black Duck	1071	249	465	196	980	765	450	939	709	11160	16984
Gadwall									1	90	91
Pintail					10				58	73	83
Green-winged Teal										65	123
European Widgeon			29							2	2
American Widgeon										4792	4821
Shoveler					1					19	20
Wood Duck					3				3	2	8
Redhead	61	133	2415		621	14		1		129	3377
Ring-necked Duck	1		8					82		19	110
Canvasback	15372	150	1311	1	321	43		183	203	2767	20351
Greater Scaup	4712	1985	856		6443	316		7	18419	31970	64708
Lesser Scaup			2		93				236	57	388
Common Goldeneye	2550	1755	317	4	909	1574	8	40	210	2213	9580
Bufflehead	60	8	17		129				195	552	961
Oldsquaw	5428	256	2		171	82			57	1130	7126
Common Eider										7	7
King Eider										18	18
White-winged Scoter	3	24			19				216	11504	11766
Surf Scoter					7				4	2452	2463
Common Scoter									56	1108	1164
Ruddy Duck					1				166	356	523
Hooded Merganser			2		2			81		77	162
Common Merganser	466	239	8	218	6470	334	30	318	8	242	8333
Red-breasted Merganser	299	20	10		183	3			307	1882	2704
Coot	6		243		3			11		765	1028
Unidentified	646	200	4		377	303			155	302	1987
Totals	30828	5031	6214	783	17262	3488	501	1905	22475	81332	169819

1959 New York State

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VIII	IX	X-a	X-b	Totals
Common Loon	1								1	52	54
Red-throated Loon										9	9
Red-necked Grebe					1						1
Horned Grebe			228		31				85	501	845
Pied-billed Grebe			1		2				1	33	37
Mute Swan									5	566	571
Canada Goose			13		72			16	96	1270	1467
Brant										2962	2962
Snow Goose										2	2
Mallard	740	190	212	379	536		200	106	59	2950	5372
Black Duck	904	207	954	154	2862	35	800	492	808	12359	19575
Gadwall										117	117
Pintail	3				14					145	162
Green-winged Teal	2			1						83	86
American Widgeon					2				24	3586	3586
Shoveler			2		1					65	66
Wood Duck				1	5					3	12
Redhead	5	1	2	3	235					31	11954
Ring-necked Duck		50	11630							100	182
Canvasback	1275	65	5689		592			66		3148	12602
Greater Scaup	6168	795	3073		7027	1500	1	35	1798	36757	72772
Lesser Scaup	3				161				17451		164
Common Goldeneye	3332	3253	685	57	1611	6507	80	229	368	3385	19507
Barrows' Goldeneye							1				1
Bufflehead	178	26	48		69			13	215	1914	2463
Oldsquaw	2824	272	8		153				5	2736	5998
Common Eider										1	1
King Eider										7	7
White-winged Scoter		8			2				21	12719	12750
Surf Scoter										528	528
Common Scoter			7							282	289
Ruddy Duck		1			1				1	66	69
Hooded Merganser	4		3		1			18		109	135
Common Merganser	1044	117	82	149	2551	50	12	763	1	189	4958
Red-breasted Merganser	81	36	7		188				80	1515	1907
Coot			221	15	2					385	623
Unidentified	500	300	180		108				450	600	2138
Totals	17064	5321	23061	759	16227	8092	1094	1738	21469	89147	183972

THE JAMAICA BAY BIRD SANCTUARY

EMANUEL LEVINE

The date is May 1st, 1958. The time is 7:00 P. M. Standing on the north shore of a large fresh-water pond are four bird-watchers. In the back of them, one can see the skyscrapers of Manhattan. All four observers had spent the day in that morass of concrete and steel, engaged in their various breadwinning tasks. Now they had binoculars and telescopes trained on seventeen spinning, whirling Phalaropes. The final tally proved to be fifteen Red Phalaropes and two Northern Phalaropes. According to other observers, the highest count during that day had been thirty-five Phalaropes at any one time.

While searching for more Phalaropes on the southern end of the pond, one of the party called attention, gleefully, to a European Teal, (pardon me, a Common Teal according to the new AOU Checklist — a change I do not think I will ever get used to). This rare visitor to our shores was in with a little group of Green-winged Teal. Also on the pond were Blue-winged Teal, Black Duck, Ruddy Duck, and some lingering Bufflehead, which had not yet departed for more northern climes.

Stalking their watery prey on the margins of the pond were several Common and Snowy Egrets.

A Green Heron had flapped away uttering an indignant "quawk," when they had taken their positions at the pond's edge.

Overhead, a Nighthawk rubbed wing coverts with several Tree Swallows, both species engaged in feasting on airborne insects.

Had more daylight been left, they no doubt would have gone searching for migrating warblers in the willow trees on the west side of the pond. But since the light was rapidly fading, these four reluctantly folded up their tripods, and stole away.

Several days later, a Wilson's Phalarope obligingly entered the same pond to complete the list of Phalaropes and a Glossy Ibis dropped in to keep company with the Egrets.

Where is this avian paradise in sight of the Manhattan skyline?

I have chosen the above paragraphs to introduce you to the Jamaica Bay Bird Sanctuary.

Jamaica Bay consists of some 18,000 acres of water, marsh and meadowland, bordered on the west and north by the Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, on the east by Nassau County, and on the south by the Rockaway Peninsula.

As far back as fifty years ago, there were plans afoot to transform this wild area into a vast industrial port and shipping terminal. Some thirty years ago, this plan still appeared on the official planning map of New York City. Fortunately, this grandiose scheme never got off the drawing board, even though now, one of the world's largest airports, The International Airport, or "Idlewild", dominates the northeastern portion of the bay area.

There were also plans to turn Jamaica Bay into the dumping grounds for the refuse and garbage of New York City's millions, to actually create a huge garbage island. This plan was also scrapped.

Probably the individual most responsible for the Jamaica Bay Bird Sanctuary as we now know the area, is Mr. Robert Moses, Commissioner of the

New York City Park Department. Mr. Moses also holds several other positions that have to do with the park systems and public works throughout the State of New York, and has always been in the forefront in the never-ending battle to conserve our natural resources.

The formal presentation of his plan for Jamaica Bay is dated July 1st, 1938. Work toward the full realization of this plan, is still going on right now, 20 years later.

The Jamaica Bay Bird Sanctuary, that part with which we are concerned, was officially opened in the Spring of 1954. Mr. Herbert Johnson was in charge, and he is still the man in charge of an area encompassing some 12,000 acres.

Mr. Johnson, incidentally, is a horticulturist by training. By his own admission, four years ago, he usually gave no more than a passing glance to even the more striking birds which entered his domain. Now, however, you are sure to find a pair of 7x50's in the cab of Mr. Johnson's light truck, as he makes his ceaseless rounds taking care of his numerous daily chores. The ornithological bug bit, and bit hard!

The heart of the sanctuary consists of two fresh-water ponds, separated by the six lane Cross Bay Boulevard, traffic artery to the Rockaways. These ponds are simply and unromantically called East Pond and West Pond. The West Pond is approximately 40 acres and the East Pond is about 100 acres.

Both ponds were created artificially and coincidentally with the extension of the New York City subway system to the Rockaways. A huge dredging operation had to be carried out to build the necessary roadbed for the subway tracks across the Jamaica Bay. For those not familiar with the area, we hasten to explain that part of the "subway" system, runs above ground. We would also like to point out, that the creation of the ponds was not an accident, but an interrelated project.

After the ponds were "manufactured", the work of creating a sanctuary began in earnest. Huge aquatic plantings were put in, such as Eel Grass, Widgeon Grass, Musk Grass, and Sago Pond Plant. These, of course, were to attract and feed ducks and geese. Artificial grain feeding is not resorted to except around the water traps used for the banding of waterfowl.

Beach grasses of several varieties were planted around the ponds as cover and to thwart erosion of the sandy soil. Additional terrestrial plantings included Russian Olive, Aronia, Rosa rugosa, Rose multiflora, and Hercules Club. In the way of trees, a large number of Willows and Poplars were installed.

Growing in their native state throughout the sanctuary are large stands of Bayberry, Wild Blackberry, Wild Cherry, and Poison Ivy. And of course, as is always the case in such areas, we have the omnipresent Phragmites.

The stocking of the sanctuary with plantings is an eternal task. Mr. Johnson and staff, maintain their own nursery for propagation and replacement of plantings. The staff of personnel varies from two to five persons, according to the season of the year.

We have above described an area which has all the makings of great bird country, but do we have the birds?

Well, as all bird students know, wild birds can read signs. No sooner

than the signs, "Jamaica Bay Bird Sanctuary," went up, than in they flocked. Of course, we are taking some poetic license in this statement, but let us present some breeding data gathered over the last four years.

The Black Duck bred on the sanctuary immediately. The next year, the Ruddy Duck and the Blue-winged Teal nested within the area. In 1956, two pairs of Shoveller raised their young on the West Pond. The breeding season of 1958 brought the successful nesting of two pairs of Florida Gallinule. It is certainly to be expected that the numbers and species will increase in the following years. It is hoped that Gadwall, which have bred with varying success over the last dozen years at the Jones Beach Bird Sanctuary, will branch out to Jamaica Bay. The Jones Beach Sanctuary is approximately twenty miles east of Jamaica Bay and unfortunately is at present being allowed to "go to pot".

All in all, twenty-seven different species of ducks and geese have been recorded on sanctuary waters, including Blue Goose, Snow Goose, European Widgeon, and Common Teal. An active observer should be able to list most of these twenty-seven during his birding year.

The sanctuary also houses a considerable sized heron rookery. As regular breeders, the rookery includes Green Heron, Black-Crowned Night Heron, Yellow-Crowned Night Heron, Common Egret and Snowy Egret. The area is also visited by Little Blue Heron, Louisiana Heron, and, of course, the Great Blue Heron. A rare visitor has been the Glossy Ibis.

Special mention must be made of the breeding of a pair of Louisiana Herons in 1955, as reported by A. J. Meyerriecks in the *Wilson Bulletin*, Vol. 69, No. 2, June 1957.

Also worthy of special mention is the recording of Purple Gallinule on the West Pond, seen by more than a score of observers, during the first week of May 1958.

As for Rails, the normal checklist complement has been recorded in full. The Clapper Rail is an abundant breeder. The breeding status of the other rails must await an actual breeding census and study.

To this list of water and marsh birds, we then add an imposing list of shore birds. The shore birds are to be found on the margins of both ponds, as well as the tidal flats, adjacent to the West Pond. The list includes such rarities as Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Ruff, Hudsonian Godwit, Marbled Godwit, American Oyster-catcher, Golden Plover, and all three Phalaropes as already pointed out. As a matter of fact, both Godwits, Ruff, and Curlew Sandpiper, have been recorded every year since the opening of the sanctuary. Those of us who can visit the area on a regular basis at the right times of the year have come to expect these birds, classing them as rare, but at the same time, regular visitors. Whether this is due to the close attention given to the area by scores of active watchers, or to other factors cannot readily be determined. Experienced observers have pointed out that it may be a mistake to put these birds in the "regular" class, as changing conditions may halt reoccurrences. This has happened many times in the East, causing unexplained absences for long period of time.

A complete listing of the shorebirds would total 32 species.

South of the West Pond, between the pond itself and the tidal flats mentioned previously, there is a large sand area which has been taken over by hundreds of Common Terns, Least Terns, and Black Skimmers, as a

breeding ground. In addition to these, the sanctuary is visited regularly by Black Terns, less often by Forster's and Roseates, and Royals and Caspians are rare visitors.

Did someone mention Gulls? Yes, we get them too, including Glaucous Gull, Iceland Gull, Kittiwake, and Little Gull. The Herring Gull breeds on islands in Jamaica Bay which are part of the sanctuary.

So far, no mention has been made of land birds. If the reader would consult a map of the area, he would realize at once that this area, located right on a migration flyway, is a sort of "oasis" both during the spring and fall migrations. Just to give a sampling of the diversity of land birds, we chose such migrants as Prothonotary Warbler, Connecticut Warbler, Blue Grosbeak, Lapland Longspur, and Cliff Swallow.

Again, we must state, that an accurate list of breeding land birds in the sanctuary, awaits further study.

The one visitor which has caused the most excitement since the opening of the sanctuary was the European Redwing (*Turdus musicus*). This species has never been recorded on the North American mainland before. It was first spotted on February 21st, 1959, and stayed at the sanctuary until February 25th. It was seen by hundreds of people and received nationwide notice thru an article published in the New York Times. Sunday, February 23rd, brought three hundred observers for a glimpse of this unusual visitor. About a week after the bird departed for parts unknown, a carload of bird-watchers showed up bearing a Texas license plate. This is probably the longest trip made by any sanctuary visitors, to date.

By now, some of the readers who are familiar with the general area, might be saying, "So what, the place was always wonderful for birds". Let those readers not overlook the simple fact that before the Jamaica Bay Bird Sanctuary was created, actually encompassing an area of some 12,000 acres, this whole water and marsh wilderness was "up for grabs", with speculators and real estate developers, waiting for the signal. Once again, we must stress how much, we, who are conservation-minded, owe to Mr. Robert Moses.

Here, the bird-watcher has a place "to hang his hat". He can park his car in a lot provided for that purpose, just adjacent to the West Pond. The West Pond is completely encircled by a gravel walk. By departing from the path for a very short distance, the mud flats can be easily birded. With just a little more effort, the East Pond can be readily worked.

There are not many places in New York City where the amateur ornithologist can pursue his hobby in such sympathetic surroundings. The hazards in some places run the gamut between actual molestation by vandals, to suspicious questioning by the police. There is also one sanctuary near New York City, which is impossible to enter.

If all this sounds as though the sanctuary was created for the watchers and not for the birds, this is only because I, and countless others, are delighted to have an area so readily accessible and so rewarding. This is a most unusual combination, in this age of urban development.

The sanctuary can be reached by auto or subway. Any map will show it. If one is going to spend any length of time there, and most of the day can easily be spent in the sanctuary, it is a good idea to bring lunch, since there are no eating places in the immediate vicinity.

Officially, one must possess a permit to enter the sanctuary. To date,

more than one thousand permits have already been issued by the Park Department, which officially administers the sanctuary. Some of the permits have been issued to persons in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Washington, D. C. A weekend rarely passes without at least one out-of-state car finding its way into the parking lot.

I would like to stress the official permit, even for those of us who visit the sanctuary regularly, and are well known to Mr. Johnson and his staff. As already pointed out, the sanctuary is officially attached to the New York City Park Department, and is dependent upon that body for funds with which to run and maintain the sanctuary.

The best way in which we can show our appreciation, and our need, and our continued interest, is to renew our permits every year, and to see that others do likewise. I am quite sure that the most regular visitors, including the writer, have not renewed their permits since they first obtained them. I am going to take care of that chore just as soon as I finish typing this article.

You may obtain your permits by writing to:

The Department of Parks
Arsenal Bldg.
Central Park
New York City, N. Y.

Besides regular maintenance of the sanctuary, work is constantly going on to improve the existing plant, and to develop some new area within sanctuary bounds. The present project centers on Canarsie Pol. Canarsie Pol is an island which lies in the bay about a mile west of the West Pond. It is the largest of several islands in Jamaica Bay. Sludge is being dredged out of the bay and being deposited on to Canarsie Pol. After chemical treatment, the sludge will be converted into artificial topsoil. Once this has been accomplished grain will be planted for the feeding of migratory waterfowl.

Projects such as these need your support and we once again ask that you write for your permits, or renew them if they have expired.

Another project on the docket, is the lowering of the water level in the East Pond. Primarily, this pond is to attract waterfowl, for breeding, feeding, and wintering. However, the abnormally high water level of the last two years has cut down the visiting shore bird population. The water-level can and will be lowered without affecting the status of the waterfowl, and at the same time exposing more marginal area for shorebirds.

Those of us who live in New York City or environs, are indeed fortunate to have such a wonderful place at our disposal. I am sure that many bird-watchers come to New York City on business or for other reasons. I am also sure, that like myself, they never travel without a pair of binoculars. Each new place brings new birding experiences. In a strange place, one always wants to find the "best spots". Left to one's own devices, the birder will eventually find the "best spots", but waste many valuable hours doing so. I recommend the Jamaica Bay Bird Sanctuary, not only for the varied bird life it offers, but also as a place for meeting others interested in the same thing as he is. After all, will any of us deny that one of the reasons we enjoy birding so much, is the cultivation of friends with the same interests?
585 Mead Terrace, South Hempsted, New York

BIRDS OBSERVED IN JAMAICA BAY — 1958

Loon, Common	Skimmer, Black
Grebe, Horned	Dove, Mourning
Pied-billed	Cuckoo, Yellow-billed
Eared	Black-billed
Cormorant, Great	Owl, Short-eared
Double-crested	Nighthawk, Common
Heron, Great Blue	Swift, Chimney
Egret, Common	Hummingbird, Ruby-throated
Snowy	Kingfisher, Belted
Heron, Louisiana	Flicker, Yellow-shafted
Little Blue	Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied
Heron, Green	Kingbird, Eastern
Black-crowned Night	Flycatcher, Great Crested
Yellow-crowned Night	Phoebe, Eastern
Bittern, American	Flycatcher, Alder
Bittern, Least	Least
Ibis, Glossy	Lark, Horned
Swan, Mute	Swallow, Tree
Goose, Canada	Swallow,
Brant	Bank
Goose, Snow	Rough-winged
Blue	Barn
Mallard	Cliff
Duck, Black	Martin, Purple
Gadwall	Jay Blue
Widgeon, European	Crow, Common
American	Fish
Pintail	Chickadee, Black-capped
Teal, Common	Titmouse, Tufted
Green-winged	Creeper, Brown
Blue-winged	Wren, Carolina
Shoveler	Long-billed Marsh
Duck, Wood	Short-billed Marsh
Redhead	Mockingbird
Duck, Ring-necked	Catbird
Canvasback	Thrasher, Brown
Scaup, Greater	Robin
Lesser	Thrush, Wood
Goldeneye, Common	Hermit
Bufflehead	Veery
Duck, Ruddy	Kinglet, Golden-crowned
Merganser, Hooded	Ruby-crowned
Common	Pipit, Water
Red-breasted	Waxwing, Cedar
Hawk, Broad-winged	Shrike, Northern
Eagle, Bald	Starling
Hawk, Marsh	Vireo, Red-eyed
Osprey	Philadelphia
Falcon, Peregrine	Warbler, Black-and-white
Hawk, Sparrow	Blue-winged
Pheasant, Ring-necked	Orange-crowned
Rail, King	Nashville
Clapper	Yellow
Virginia	Cape May
Sora	Myrtle
Gallinule, Purple	Black-throated Green
Common	Blackburnian
Coot, American	Chestnut-sided
Oystercatcher, Am.	Blackpoll
Plover, Piping	Pine

Plover, Semipalmated
 Wilson's
 Killdeer
 Golden
 Black-bellied
 Turnstone, Ruddy
 Woodcock, Am.
 Snipe, Common
 Whimbrel
 Sandpiper, Spotted
 Willet
 Yellowlegs, Greater
 Lesser
 Knot
 Sandpiper, Purple
 Pectoral
 White-rumped
 Baird's
 Least
 Dunlin
 Dowitcher, Short-billed
 Long-billed
 Sandpiper, Stilt
 Semipalmated
 Western
 Buff-breasted
 Godwit, Marbled
 Hudsonian
 Sanderling
 Phalarope, Red
 Wilson's
 Northern
 Gull, Glaucous
 Iceland
 Great Black-backed
 Herring
 Ring-billed
 Laughing
 Bonaparte's
 Little
 Tern, Forster's
 Common
 Roseate
 Least
 Caspian
 Black

Warbler
 Prairie
 Palm
 Waterthrush, Northern
 Warbler, Kentucky
 Connecticut
 Yellowthroat
 Chat, Yellow-breasted
 Redstart, American
 Sparrow, House
 Bobolink
 Meadowlark, Eastern
 Blackbird, Redwinged
 Oriole, Baltimore
 Grackle, Common
 Cowbird, Brown-headed
 Tanager, Scarlet
 Cardinal
 Grosbeak, Rose-breasted
 Blue
 Grosbeak, Evening
 Finch, Purple
 House
 Goldfinch, American
 Towhee, Rufous-sided
 Sparrow, Ipswich
 Savannah
 Sharp-tailed
 Seaside
 Junco, Slate-colored
 Sparrow, Tree
 Chipping
 Field
 White-crowned
 Sparrow
 White-throated
 Fox
 Swamp
 Song
 Longspur, Lapland
 Bunting, Snow

MONTEZUMA REFUGE RESTRICTS DIKE TRAVEL

Waterfowl are at the lowest numbers of the last two years. To increase waterfowl production, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is restricting public use of Federal refuges during the nesting season.

Organized groups may arrange for conducted tours by contacting the refuge manager in advance. Simply, address a letter to: John S. Morse, Refuge Manager, R. D. #1, Seneca Falls, New York.

WARBLERS IN SOUTHERN NEW YORK

FRITZ SCHEIDER

I. "SOUTHERN" WARBLERS

Central New York represents an aggregate of breeding warblers that offers many ornithological opportunities, both in questions asked and in possibilities of problems solved. (It should be noted at the outset that this article will raise many problems in local distribution and solve very few.) The fact that Central New York is a portion of the northern limit of certain "southern" warblers and similarly the southern limit of certain more "northern" warbler forms permits a careful study of small, restricted populations of the species in question.

Further, the small number of individuals of any single species (see below) would indicate that very few local areas meet the species' requirements and/or that the small population present has some special adaptive factors, either greater range of tolerances of conditions or acceptance of ecological conditions not suitable to a greater percentage of the individuals of the species at, say, the species' population center. One can not uniformly call the areas involved "marginal" breeding areas, as the birds are apparently successful in yearly production of young, return year after year to the same area, and, in some cases, give evidence of expansion to sectors known to have been unoccupied previously. Such a sequence of species phenomena would not support the premise that these "oases" of southern warblers are marginal habitat.

First, of course, one must ask, "What area?" Briefly, the area to be discussed encompasses the four counties around Oneida Lake (Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, and Oswego Counties), and Cayuga County north of Route 31. Anyone may well say that this is not all of Central New York, and that such a narrow delimitation ranks at least provincial, if not inaccurate. Let us strike a middle position, accept the definition as chauvinistic in principle, and call it regional in fact.

Second, how have the species in question been studied? The present picture stems from a ten-year (1948-1958) study of the warblers in question by the author, plus a compilation of data from other local birders through this period, with earlier material from various annotated checklists, local and regional publications, and theses of summer works published through the New York State College of Forestry (see Bibliography).

The major question that each record or observation of a "southern" warbler (for list of same, vide *infra*) raises is simply, "Why does this species occur only in limited numbers or limited sectors of the area under discussion?" And the answer presented here is frankly an evasion, as what can be given is only "Where" this species occurs, and, indeed, this is known only in part. A further problem exists as to why a species occurs regularly in a specific area with apparent complete absence from, or avoidance of, similar, even larger, adjacent areas. What is tolerable about one area, intolerable about the other? The only prospect at present is to give indications of what appear to be requirements and/or distribution and, on the basis of comparison with other areas, both locally and range-wide, find common factors or specific differences.

One of the major problems is determination of "successful" breeding of the species. The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs has established criteria for evidence of nesting, but any of the criteria extend only through a *single* season. The repeated presence of a species through several breeding seasons would also seem to be a logical but indirect proof of successful breeding, particularly if increasing numbers of individuals are involved. Admittedly a single singing male could summer at the periphery of the species range, but it is doubtful whether individuals would do this persistently, or that apparent pairs would also (i. e. without breeding).

A further consideration is the problem of reoccupancy of an area yearly versus rechecking of an area by local observers. Camillus Valley, the two and a half mile stretch along Nine Mile Creek valley south of Camillus in Onondaga County, and Selkirk Shores State Park near Pulaski in Oswego County have become locally famous as sites where "southern" warbler species may be seen regularly, even with a fair degree of certainty, granted June and a good ear. Consequently, these areas each spring and early summer produce a wealth of data out of all proportion to their geographical size. Yet the concentration of birders in such areas and the attendant wealth of data are not to be decried, for such concentration has led to a maximum of nest observations there, and the observations of species' characteristics and particularly of song have been responsible for the discovery of other local sites of the warblers in question.

Of interest but little overall significance are migrational reports of the species in question. Certainly at the northern fringe of their range, individuals seen in spring migration may just as well be migrational strays as individuals on the way to specific local breeding sites. However, in fall migration, particularly if young or immature birds are seen, one may well speculate as to the area of their origin, (c. f. Hooded Warbler).

The data to follow attempts to give a ten year synopsis of the available material on the species in question. Some species follow a neat geographical distribution (why?), others a specific plant distribution (see Pine and Cerulean Warblers), others a mixture of these two forms of distribution. The majority show an accumulation of records and some confusion attendant thereon.

As to patterns of future distribution and/or spread of these "southerners" one can only project further those trends and advances that have developed over the past ten years. One could bemoan the lack of earlier data (e. g. 1930-1940 or 1940-1950), and would wish for a greater detail and extent of observations from older reports (see Bibliography), but such stone-throwing is certainly unbecoming and mildly hypocritical in all who bird much but publish little, present company included.

PHOTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*). On August 6, 1944 an adult male was seen feeding a young bird well able to fly in the Short Point Bay area of the south shore of Oneida Lake. The occurrence was duly noted, carefully filed, and forgotten. It was not until late May 1953 that, on the basis of this one record, a foray into the area disclosed at least one pair of birds present. The first report in 1954 was *five* seen on May 13, and on May 22 of that year a nest (with three eggs) was found in a low, rotted willow stump (Minor). In 1955 five singing males were located

in this area and a second nest was located. In 1956 nest-building was observed on May 23.

The first migrational record occurred when a single male was seen May 18, 1957 at Green Lakes State Park (B. Peterson), this at a time when the usual three to five males had established singing posts around the periphery of Short Point Bay. The same year, a new location, the first extension in five years, was noted, complete with nest and two successfully fledged young, June 5 to July 10, at Muskrat Bay, Oneida Lake, about two miles west of the formerly restricted colony. In 1958, the first bird, a singing male, was seen there on May 7, a record arrival date. And on June 1 a female was seen nest-building in a three-foot stump in a new sector of the swamp.

Since the discovery of this species at Short Point Bay in 1944, the area has changed considerably. In 1944 there were on the edge of the bay just two camps, reached by boat or a very muddy footpath. Starting in 1953 a dirt road was inched around the bay, and this has by yearly improvements been expanded to a two-lane dirt road and the bay has become rimmed with camps and some year-round houses. This road is flooded over each spring by the rise of Oneida Lake; the red maple swamp about the periphery of the bay correspondingly floods. However, when the flood waters recede, the water is held in the swamp to dwindle gradually through the late spring and early summer. This flooding has not particularly changed the character of the red maple swamp, but will probably do so, as the trees are much more susceptible to blow-down in this permanently soft bottom. Those trees that have succumbed to wind action provide many tangles for the Prothonotaries to feed about and have allowed a very small growth of young willow (mostly along the road), swamp dogwood, and buttonbush to grow up. However, the extensive area of buttonbush found in and around the Prothonotary colony in the Oak Orchard Creek near Batavia is not present here; similarly it might be noted that the Prothonotary colony at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Seneca Falls, has a very restricted amount of buttonbush and consists largely of a mixed red maple - elm swamp.

Other areas in Central New York (limited definition) may support colonies of Prothonotaries. Peter Scott swamp, northeast of Phoenix, Oswego County, has extensive red maple swamps with almost constant flood conditions (it is actually a huge backwater of the Oneida River) and has large areas of buttonbush and dead trees intermingled. However, this area would be accessible only to a well-provisioned muskrat with a waterproof compass or to someone canoe-rich and wisdom-poor. A similar area exists around the western, northern and eastern edges of Howland's Island Game Management Area near Port Byron, Cayuga County. Though this area could be reached by land, it would probably best be covered by boat or canoe.

Neither Hyde nor Spiker gives any reference to the Prothonotary in their various summer studies in Central New York. Stoner, however, found a pair in June (2nd and 7th) 1928 in the willows along Chittenango Creek north of Bridgeport. Intermittent checks there over the last ten years have failed to disclose any sign of the species' presence, and the area has become most unsuitable through the channel dredging for boat docking over the past eight years.

GOLDEN-WINGER WARBLER (*Vermivora chrysoptera*). Probably the most rapidly spreading "southern" warbler now present in Central New

York. Spiker briefly mentions them as present in the Potter Swamp area (1929-1931). Hyde gives only one record for two summers' work (1935-1936), this a probable migrant near Rochester. Stoner mentions a single male June 11 and 28, 1928, in the Chittenango Creek area as was the Prothonotary, and a much more significant record on June 20, 1928 on the north shore of Oneida Lake near Cleveland. How long this rare status persisted is hard to determine. There are three or four late May records of migrant birds from 1943-1950 from Oakwood cemetery at Syracuse, but no suggestion of breeding birds.

On May 18, 1951 four singing males were discovered in the brushy fringes of the bottom-lands of Camillus Valley by F. Scheider and Wilson Schramm. In 1952 two males were again seen there, and at this time the Onondaga Audubon Society, now alerted to their possibility, found four singing males at Three Rivers Game Management Area near Baldwinsville. Note that the numbers in these cases can be counted on a single hand.

In 1953 up to ten singing males were located in Camillus Valley and seven or eight in the Three Rivers GMA. In the spring of 1954 five new stations were located, three in northwestern Onondaga County (Beaver Lake, Lysander, West Phoenix) and two in southeastern Oswego County (Big Bay Area, Constantia). The last site was definitely a new station, as the area had been birded regularly for the previous eight years by the writer, and Golden-wings had never been observed there. Most surprising was a singing male found on June 20 at the periphery of an alder bog in eastern Oswego County, north of Williamstown. This station is on the southern edge of the Tug Hill Plateau country, a remarkable extension of range (if it was that; cf. Stoner's earlier record).

In 1955 the Camillus Valley sector seemed to reach saturation level with eight to nine pairs established. (Three years of exploration was to show this estimate only one-third correct). Two more stations were located in early June 1955, the most significant in Rock Cut Valley, Onondaga County, the first reported southeast of Syracuse and the first breeding station south of Oneida Lake and east of Route 11. In the spring of 1956 it was first reported established at Selkirk Shores State Park, definitely a new area, for this particular park had been vigorously birded by Mrs. E. Evans for the previous five years. And in May, a single male was first seen at Oneida, Oneida County. At least three different stations were located in the Plainville area, Onondaga County (M. Bitz).

By 1957 the species had become accepted as a regular and dependable breeder, though still quite uncommon, and new sites at Otter Lake, Cayuga County, and at Pleasant Valley, near Marcellus, Onondaga County, were no surprise. Quite surprising, however, was a pair established in a patch of pine-oak barrens between Phoenix and Caughdenoy, Oswego County. All previous sites had been predictably the same — slightly wet areas with a scattered growth of red maple, ash, pin cherry or aspen saplings, with adjacent wet brush and drier alder and higher stands of maple, elm, ash, and cherry, and some large standing dead trees for singing posts. 1958 produced only two new sites, both along the Oneida River near Euclid, Onondaga County, but scattered reports of singing males along Onondaga Creek south of Syracuse and near Tully, Onondaga County, were made too.

Two points need yet to be made about the explosive spread of this species.

To date, no indications, not even persistently singing males, have been found around the periphery of Cicero Bog or, for that matter, any place in the flat lands along the south shore of Oneida Lake. The areas around Rome and Oneida have yet to see breeding Golden-wings, and the Rome Pine Plains, an excellent hodgepodge of wet brush and dry pine flats, through the past three years has been a complete blank for them.

On September 9, 1956, a single male Golden-winged was seen at Bridgeport; on August 17, 1958, six Golden-winged Warblers were seen migrating down the Sandy Pond dunes and through the outer woods at Selkirk Shores State Park; again a single male was seen there August 30, 1958, moving with a flock of Bay-breasted, Wilson's, and Tennessee Warblers and Redstarts. All these observations give cause for considerable speculation for, to date, no known colonies are present north of Selkirk Shores State Park, yet birds which could be suspected of migrating are seen each fall. These observations raise the question on whether there are breeding stations north of the known sites. And, if so, where? Of interest in this regard is a report of Golden-winged, Blue-winged, and Brewster's Warblers seen May 25, 1956, near Watertown by J. and A. Blake (Kingbird vol. V, No. 2, p. 65).

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora pinus*) and **BREWSTER'S WARBLER** (*Vermivora leucobronchialis*). On May 17, 1953 a singing male Blue-winged was observed in the west gulf of Camillus Valley; it was seen repeatedly through the last spring and early summer there, without evidence of breeding (numerous observers). On May 9, 1954 a singing male was again seen there and intermittently through the late spring; a second male was seen two miles further north in the main valley in early June. As in 1953, no evidence of breeding was detected. On May 8, 1955, a singing male was again observed in the same area and later in the season was observed courting a female Golden-winged. In May 1956 a singing male Blue-winged was again located and a singing male Brewster's was also located in the same area. However, in May 1957 no Blue-winged Warbler was noted but four Brewster's Warblers were noted along the main valley and in the west gulf in one day (May 12). However, a male Blue-winged was reported near Oneida Castle May 4, 1957. N.b: The previous spring had seen the first Golden-winged Warbler record for the latter area.

In May 1958 no Blue-winged Warblers and only a single male Brewster's was located at Camillus.

On August 5, 1957 a group of four Blue-winged Warblers was seen near Otter Lake by D. Whitman; this and the presence of Brewster's Warblers are the strongest breeding evidences to date of the Blue-winged Warbler for the area.

Presently the Blue-winged is at best a very rare and frankly erratic breeder, but the expanding Golden-winged colonies mentioned heretofore should be regularly checked to see if Blue-winged Warblers eventually move in (e. g. the Taylor Hollow situation near Buffalo, Region I).

CERULEAN WARBLER (*Dendroica cerulea*). This warbler usually arrives about the fifth or sixth of May and in favored areas can be a fairly common breeding bird. The breeding stations presently known read like a west-to-east chain from Howland's Island GMA, Cross Lake, south through Camillus Valley, Marcellus, Pleasant Valley South Onondaga, and east to Cicero Bog, Bridgeport, and Stockbridge Valley south of Oneida. North of

the immediate Seneca River drainage and the south shore of Oneida Lake it is an extremely rare bird, and I know of just one record for the north shore of Oneida Lake in 15 years of observation. It has been noted in late spring at Tully Lakes, Onondaga County, and Selkirk Shores State Park, Oswego County, but is not known to breed in any of these places.

Of major interest regarding this species is the rapidly spreading Dutch Elm disease and Elm Bark Beetle, for these elm pests are likely to create a rapid and nearly complete loss of this species' major habitat requirement — stands of tall open trees near sluggish water courses, a requirement almost universally fulfilled by the elms of the area. The fact that this is the preferred habitat is evidenced by the location of only one breeding station away from such habitat, said station located in a stand of magnificent red oaks on the east side of Cross Lake.

Sample singing male counts should be taken yearly, as this is a readily counted species (singing males can be heard 1/5th of a mile or more) and its status is likely to change as rapidly as the decrease and eventual loss of elm trees progresses.

High count to date is 41 singing males May 25, 1953, Camillus Valley, but for the last three years the high counts there have ranged 15-20 individuals. It will be particularly interesting to see if the species remains of its major habitat tree species is significantly reduced or wiped out, and, if the bird remains, what will be the secondary tree-species chosen. The situation seems currently quite comparable to the loss of the American Chestnut and its effect on breeding bird populations five decades ago.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*). This bird has virtually no migratory history in the area. Records are basically breeding records and, with one exception, a singing bird July 4, 1957, Howland's Island, GMA, are confined to the Camillus Valley - Marcellus - Otisco Lake axis. For ten years the bird was known to occur sporadically (one bird per two to three years) but not known to breed in the area despite the numerous protestations of bird manuals, field guides, and local and state texts. In May 1956 a single singing bird was located in a wet brushy swamp in the west gulf of Camillus Valley; there was no evidence that it bred.

In June 1957 two nests were discovered; the first was a nest with five young located in a heavy patch of dry brush June 23, on the east side of Camillus Valley; a second nest was discovered in late June on the west side of Nine Mile Creek valley just north of Marietta, Onondaga County. In 1958 three different singing males were located about Camillus Valley, and one nest with four fledged young nearby (June 22) was located.

One cannot help asking whether the linear distribution (parallel to the outlet of Otisco Lake) of this species prevails on the dry, brushy hillsides above outflow streams from Skaneateles Lake, Jamesville Reservoir, and Cazenovia Lake. Future summers with further exploration should confirm or deny this speculation.

HOODED WARBLER (*Wilsonia citrina*). Stoner reported a single male and a pair at Constantia and Panther Lake respectively in 1929. To the best of my knowledge, the bird has not been observed again on the north shore of Oneida Lake, and its present distribution peculiarly and neatly avoids that sector. Hyde mentions that this species occurs as a breeder in lakeside woods from Irondequoit Bay to little Sodus Bay. The present num-

ber of located pairs of this species in the area approximates a dozen, all confined to three very distinct areas. Five pairs are located south of Camillus and east of Marcellus. Three pairs are located east of Fayetteville and in Green Lakes State Park. And four pairs are known from the Mexico-Selkirk Shores State Park area. In every case the birds are found in well-drained open maple woods with a thick but not impenetrable undergrowth of sapling maples. The constancy of this habitat choice has led to the finding of breeding stations by locating hillsides with such wooded cover about the periphery of a single known breeding pair's territory. Probably regular summer checking will produce more stations, but the apparent specificity of habitat will cause some losses (e. g. one pair at Selkirk Shores State Park lost to a new parking lot and a second pair there has moved because of loss of understory saplings by shading).

In 1958 Dr. Spofford located two active nests, one with two eggs (and two Cowbird eggs) June 15 at Selkirk Shores State Park, and a second with one egg and three Cowbird eggs June 29 south of Onondaga Hill.

There are two fall migrant records, both of adult males, along the Sandy Pond dunes. As in the case of the Golden-winged Warblers seen there, one wonders, whence their origin? Are there breeding stations to the north of that area?

PINE WARBLER (*Dendroica pinus*). Though not a strictly southern warbler, this species has the "confinement" of some of the previously considered species. One to two pairs are regularly found in a small grove of huge white pines just south of the Salmon River in Selkirk Shores State Park. And since June 1954, at least one and up to three singing male Pine Warblers have been found in the pine oak scrub of the Rome Pine Plains between Sylvan Beach and Rome, Oneida County. The latter area will probably be productive of more individuals if regularly worked, but the recent invasion of roads and permanent homes in the area makes one wonder how long this locally unique area of pitch, white, and red pine will persist.

Rare Southern Warblers

PRAIRIE WARBLER (*Dendroica discolor*). Prior to 1954 one to two Prairie Warblers per year were seen in migration at Selkirk Shores State Park, but since then the bird has become an unknown in the area. A single bird was carefully studied on the late date of September 27, 1958 at Selkirk Shores State Park. It is suspected that all of these lakeshore individuals, both spring and fall, come from the small colony of Prairie Warblers located some 35 miles north of Kingston, Ontario.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (*Dendroica dominica*). At present a single local record, that of a singing male, April 30, 1954 at Syracuse (Schneider). This bird allowed such a close approach that the observer was able to determine the presence of complete white eye-lines bilaterally, and the suspicion that this was the Mississippi Valley subspecies "albilora" is high. Eaton, *Birds of New York*, vol. II, 1909. *Bibliography: Part I*

Hyde, A. Sidney, *Roosevelt Wildlife Bulletin*, vol. VII #2, 1939.

Stoner, Dayton, *Roosevelt Wildlife Annals*, vol. 11 # 3 & 4.

Spiker, Charles J., *Roosevelt Wildlife Bulletin*, vol. IV #1, 1931, and vol. VIII #1, 1935.

Kingbird, vol. IV # 2 & 3, 1954; vol. V # 2 & 3, 1955; vol. VI # 2 & 3, 1956; vol. VII #2 & 3, 1957; vol. VIII #2 & 3, 1958.

151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE BIRD WATCHERS LIBRARY

ALLEN H. BENTON

In books, as in art, everyone has his own tastes. This list will reflect mine. There are, however, no poor or useless books in the list, and the bird-watcher who has these on his shelves will, I am sure, use each one frequently.

Identification

Peterson, Roger T. *Field Guide to the Birds*. Houghton-Mifflin Co. This is the *sine qua non* for the bird-watcher, and most of us have worn out several. If you travel, the *Field Guide to Western Birds*, same author and publisher, is highly recommended.

Reference

Allen, A. A. *The Book of Bird Life*. D. VanNostrand Co. Inc. or Wallace, George J. *An introduction to Ornithology*. Macmillan Co. These are the leading textbooks for college courses, and either one will prove useful and interesting.

Chapman, Frank. *Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America*. Second Revised Edition. D. Appleton and Co. A classic, and deservedly so. No ornithological library should be without it. It contains a wealth of information in a small package.

Pettingill, O. S. *A Laboratory and Field Manual of Ornithology*. Burgess Publishing Co., Minneapolis. Though designed for college courses, this large book contains much of general interest, and is particularly good for the abundant references to books, journals, and articles about birds.

Eaton, E. H. *Birds of New York*. 2 vols. New York State Museum, Albany. You'll have to pick this up second hand, if you don't have a copy, and it will probably cost you \$12 to \$15. But no New York State birder can afford to be without it. Try to get the first printing, with the magnificent Fuertes plates printed on double-weight stock.

American Ornithologists' Union. *Check-list of North American Birds*. Fifth Edition. Probably each individual would not need a copy of this, but there should be at least one in each club for reference use.

Pough, Richard H. *Audubon Bird Guide*. 2 vols. Doubleday and Co. Somewhat more inclusive than Peterson's books, these two volumes contain a lot of background information as well as identification data. The plates by Don Eckelberry are beautifully done.

Bent, A. C. *Life Histories of North American Birds*. U. S. Nat'l. Museum. Twenty volumes of this great work are now out. Older ones bring a premium in the used book market, but several have been reprinted. Not every member can afford them, but each club should try to build up a complete set.

Attracting Birds

McKenny, Margaret. *Birds in the Garden and how to attract them*. Univ. of Minnesota Press. There are many other books of this type, but I like this one best. It is attractive as well as functional, and covers the subject pretty thoroughly.

Bird Banding

Lockley, R. M., and Rosemary Russell. *Bird Ringing: the art of Bird Study by Individual Marking*. Crosby Lockwood and Son Lt., London. There are American books on this subject, but I think you'll like this one.

Bird Photography

- Allen, A. A. Stalking birds with color camera. Natl. Geog. Society.
Bailey, A. M. Nature Photography with Miniature Cameras. Mus. Pict. No. 1, Denver Mus. of Natural History.
Shumway, Herbert D. Nature Photography Guide. Greenberg, Publisher.
Yeates, G. K. Bird Photography. Faber and Faber Ltd., London. Each of these books presents a different point of view, but each is well written and illustrated.

Bird Study

- Griscom, Ludlow. Modern Bird Study. Harvard Univ. Press.
Hickey, J. J. A Guide to Bird Watching. Oxford Univ. Press.
Fisher, James. Watching Birds. Penguin Books.
Saunders, A. A. The Lives of Wild Birds. Doubleday and Co. Any of these, and there are others as well, will give a good introduction to modern methods of scientific bird study. It might be well to look them over first, and pick the one which meets your own needs.
Pettingill, O. S. A guide to Bird Finding East of the Mississippi. A guide to Bird Finding West of the Mississippi. Oxford Univ. Press. To organize your bird-watching, and to fit it into your travelling, use these two books. They tell you when and where to look for the most interesting birding spots in each of the 48 states.

Most bird-watchers have interests in nature beyond the bird group. For those, a few semi-popular and popular works of various types are listed here.
Storer, John. The web of life. Devin Adair Co. A popular survey of general ecology.

Grange, Wallace B. Those of the forest. Flambeau Publ. Co., Babcock, Wisconsin. Written as fiction, but bulging with fact, this book may become a classic of natural history writing. Better give it a try.

Hillcourt, William. Field Book of Nature Activities. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. A survey of techniques, ideas for young people's nature study, etc. Not technical, but good.

I'll complete the list with a few personal favorites, which cover ground not included in those already listed.

Campbell, Bruce. Finding Nests. William Collins Sons and Co., Ltd. The art of nest-finding is not quite lost, and if you want to practice, this will tell you how.

Kortright, F. H. The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America. American Wildlife Institute. I like this book as much for its illustrations as for its text. It's a beautiful book, and a useful one.

Saunders, A. A. A Guide to Bird Songs. Doubleday and Co., Inc. As a supplement to your bird song records, this little classic will help you remember and recognize unfamiliar songs.

And if you want to know what the professional ornithologists are doing: Wolfson, Albert, Editor. Recent Advances in Avian Biology. Univ. of Illinois Press, Urbana.

Last, just for fun:

Lorenz, Konrad Z. King Solomon's Ring. Thomas Y. Crowell Co.

Leopold, Aldo. A Sand County Almanac and Sketches here and there. Oxford University Press, N. Y.

Here's to good reading; N. Y. S. College for Teachers, Albany 3

FIELD NOTES

The White-headed Eagle Survey — Although considerable information about nesting locations and the breeding status of eagles in New York has been gathered in the last few years, there is considerable confusion about the significance of summer records. Summer eagles consist of two separate but not easily separable populations: the potential breeders, and the summer visitors. The breeding population is a small group presently known only from parts of the Adirondacks and the St. Lawrence - Lake Ontario Basin. The other and perhaps larger group is the Florida population which comes north after breeding, along with their young of the year, to spend the summer on our lakes and waterways. Since these two populations are regularly confused in the field, the survey at present is unable to come to any real appreciation of the size of either group.

Using the fact that the breeding population is on location by March and stays throughout April, May and June, whereas the Florida group does not arrive until late May or June, it is hoped that more systematic recording of the coming, the stay and the departure of eagles will allow further insight into their relationships than we now have. Of course, in many cases the date will reflect not the time of the eagle's appearance but the arrival of the observer! In spite of this and other such misleading factors, we hope that some significant information will turn up.

Other things to keep in mind are the late August or September departure of the Florida birds for the south to breed in November, while the New York breeders may stay on into late fall or winter. A third population of birds that have bred north of the St. Lawrence comes down in winter to keep below the freeze-up line. During late February and early spring these birds are passing north again, where they may be confused with resident birds, except that they do not stay long in one place. With three separate categories of eagles to keep account of, it is difficult to classify any particular bird unless known to be nesting.

The White-headed Eagle Survey Committee would welcome the aid of bird watchers generally in gathering information on eagles in New York and surrounding areas. When sufficient records are assembled it may be possible to construct a fair picture of our own breeding population, and of the comings and goings, the size and age categories of summer and winter visitant groups. Similar studies of the status of the eagle are underway in Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, and just recently New Jersey. It is hoped that the information gathered may be of assistance in the coming three-year, continent-wide survey of the eagle by the National Audubon Society under the direction of Dr. Harold S. Peters.

Information about eagles, and particularly concerning present and past nesting sites, may be sent to your regional KINGBIRD editor, to such other members of the committee as Mr. Robert Andele, 59 Blantyne Road, Buffalo; Mr. Greenleaf Chase, Ambersand Bay Road, Saranac Lake; Mr. John Wilson, Rt. 37, Watertown; Mr. Jayson Walker, 89 Church St., Waterloo, N. Y. or to the writer — Walter R. Spofford, 766 Irving Avenue, Syracuse.

Varied Thrush in Jefferson County — During the first week of December 1958 a "strange bird" was seen on the grounds of the Jefferson County Hospital, 1240 Cofeen St., Watertown. It stayed in a protected corner planted with ornamental yews and could readily be observed from inside the hospital. On December 8 Dr. T. S. Montague, the hospital director, informed me of its presence, and, after it had been identified as a Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius meruloides*), arrangements were made to collect the bird. This was done the following day and a study skin was prepared by John Kelly of the Watertown High School faculty. The specimen has been presented to the New York State Museum in Albany where it is catalogued as No. 18665.

The Varied Thrush is a bird of the far west and is of accidental occurrence in the east, most of the vagrants appearing in November or December. Insofar as I have been able to determine, there are only three previous specimen from our state. These were all taken on Long Island over fifty years ago (Eaton, *Birds of New York*, 1914 p. 534). There is an additional Staten Island record in 1936 which is authenticated by a photograph (Auk, V.54 p. 394). — John B. Belknap, 92 Clinton Street, Gouverneur.

A Franklin's Gull in Spring Plumage at Oswego — On March 15, 1959, a day of very strong southerly winds, there were relatively few ducks and gulls at Oswego Harbor, on Lake Ontario. Scanning the gulls for a possible "white-winger" I saw a small black-headed gull circling below the just west of Fort Ontario. The striking wing pattern showed a clear gray mantle, with a white band along the trailing edge which laterally crossed the primary feathers as a white bar, separating the black wing tip from the gray mantle. It was completely unfamiliar to me, and Peterson's "Eastern Field Guide" was consulted. The bird proved to be identical with the drawing of Franklin's Gull shown on Plate #33. At this point the gull was flying 10 to 15 feet over the surface of the water, dropping down to feed at frequent intervals. After about ten minutes it settled on a submerged rock and began a series of bathing maneuvers, for perhaps five minutes. Then it flew in a half circle and alighted on the ice flow just below the Fort, scarcely 100 yards from me. Here it began a prolonged preening of its feathers. During this period of at least twenty minutes it was watched through a 30X Bauscope and 10 x 50 binoculars mounted on a tripod, and its plumage could be noted in detail. Close in front of it were two Ring-billed Gulls and behind it were both Herring and Black-backed Gulls. This bird was decidedly smaller than the Ring-billed, and all its markings identified it as a Franklin's Gull in spring ("alternate") plumage. The identification was confirmed by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Farnham and Dr. Walter Spofford, who also enjoyed the opportunity to see this rare visitor.

Although Franklin's Gull is known as a visitor to Lake Ontario, previous records are for the fall and winter months, when the bird is in the winter ("basic") plumage. The KINGBIRD has records of one or more each year, in either the Niagara or Rochester areas. This appears to be the first record of this species for the eastern end of Lake Ontario, and specifically for Region 5 of New York. Examination of published weather maps for the preceding several days suggests that the bird may have been carried from its wintering grounds along the western Gulf Coast up into the Mississippi Valley, then up into the Ontario Basin. The lengthy bathing and preening in the protection of Oswego Harbor further suggest a long journey. — Robert W. Seaman, 10 Onondaga Street, Skaneateles.

Some Golden Eagles in New York — The following occurrences seem worthy of record: on October 2, 1953 a Golden Eagle was shot near Sylvan Beach (Oneida Lake), N. Y., by a hunter who said he shot the bird in self-defense! A photograph of the bird taken at the Oneida barracks of the N. Y. State Police shows the eagle to have been a first year bird with extensive white at the base of the tail and inner primaries.

On April 25, 1953 Dr. and Mrs. Axtell and the writer watched a Golden Eagle fly from a perch on the west side of the Genesee River in Letchworth Park, circle over the gorge, and then perch in a live pine tree above a bluff on the other side. A Red-tailed Hawk harassed the eagle continuously, the latter sometimes rolling over to meet the nearly vertical stoops of the screaming buzzard. After the eagle had perched among the limbs of the pine, the Red-tail continued his assault for several minutes, the eagle turning his head up and crouching at each onslaught. Some time later the eagle flew to another perch and then disappeared through the trees of a small ravine. This bird was immature, showing white at the base of the tail, but little or none on the wings.

On June 1, 1955 Mr. Robert Bauer, Game Technician at the Howland's Island State Game Preserve a few miles north of Montezuma, noticing that the breeding ducks were showing hawk alarm, looked up to see two adult Golden Eagles a few hundred feet above the marsh, engaging in aerial play. The two birds were circling together and approaching each other with lowered feet, occasionally grasping talons in mid-air, in a "courtship" type display, as they slowly made their way northward out of the refuge area. Both were fully adult eagles without showing any white. Since no breeding Golden Eagles are known within one hundred miles of this location, it must be assumed that these were non-breeding birds passing north at the end of the spring migration period. Eagles and large buzzards such as the Red-tail frequently engage in flight displays, and at any time of the year, although usually these are considered to be part of territory occupancy. Other such late spring migrant eagles have been recorded previously, including one at Rochester on May 20, 1951; an immature near Degrasse on May 23, 1953 (Trimm), and one over Pinnacle Hill, Branchport on May 25, 1954.

Besides the two adult birds recorded above, Mr. Bauer recalls seeing a first year Golden Eagle with white at the bases of inner primaries and tail over Howlands Island, but he did not record the date. Only a few miles south, at the Montezuma Refuge, Dr. Fritz Scheider saw a similar bird passing south on November 12, 1950. — Walter R. Spofford, 766 Irving Avenue, Syracuse.

Unusual Song Sparrow Diet — On June 23, 1958 I observed a Song Sparrow in my garden feeding two Cowbird fledglings a rather unusual diet. The bird made quick and frequent trips to the rows of sunflower seeds which were sprouting and unfolding their first seed leaves. These he would nip off, leaving only the stem stubs, and cram them into the throats of his two Cowbird foster children as they sat on the fence nearby. I wonder whether anyone can report a similar observation. — Mrs. Lewis H. Stratton, Route 2, Oxford.

Large Flights of Red Phalaropes on Long Island — On April 28, 1958, at about 9:30 A. M., Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Goldsmith of Center Moriches noted several hundred Red Phalaropes swimming in the water near their fishing station on the north shore of Moriches Bay. Mrs. Goldsmith notified her mother, Mrs. John Lukert of East Moriches, an amateur ornithologist, on whose farm the first Cattle Egret was recorded for New York State. Mrs. Lukert estimated there were from 1,500 to 2,000 Red Phalaropes at about 3:30 P. M. and alerted other bird observers in the area. It was foggy all day with a south wind blowing about 31 miles per hour from 10:00 A. M. to 12:00 noon.

By 5:00 P. M. only about 200 were seen. When I arrived at 5:30 P. M. they had reduced to 50 and two hours later only 12 were left. Some were feeding on shore, or in the water very close to shore, and appearing to be eating the tiny shell, *Gemma gemma*, great quantities of which were floating close to shore.

They may have been feeding on jellyfish further out in the bay, as Mrs. Goldsmith saw the first ones of the year the day before. In the late afternoon, also on April 28, several hundred were seen in or near the boat basin at Shinnecock Inlet by Supervisor Meschutt of Southampton Town.

The next morning Gilbert Raynor of Manorville saw 90 at Westhampton Beach at 11:00 A. M., but none were at Shinnecock Inlet by 12:00 noon. April 29 was a foggy day, with a south wind blowing at 26 miles per hour at 11:00 A. M. At Remsenberg at 1:45 P. M. that day, I saw 50 Red Phalaropes in five minutes in small groups, flying east, close to the north shore of Moriches Bay. I hastily drove eastward about a mile and saw them still flying in the same direction. About 2:15 P. M., at West Bay bridge, Westhampton Beach, I was surprised to find about 2,000 Phalaropes in the water ranging to about one-half mile to the west where, three hours earlier, Saynor had found only 80. Small groups were arriving from the west while others, up to about 20 in a flock, were attempting to fly east but were having great difficulty in getting over the wires.

I drove about three-quarters of a mile east to the next bridge (Rogers) and found about 300 in the water west of the bridge. About three miles further east at Shinnecock Bay a spot check revealed 55 in five minutes, flying east over the ocean close to shore. The visibility was about 1,000 feet. At Shinnecock Inlet I saw 100 at 3:00 P. M. The flight was probably just reaching there, as Raynor had none there three hours earlier.

At 6:00 P. M. there was still about 1,000 at West Bay bridge, and as birds were continually arriving from the west and others leaving by flying east over the bridge, this must have been an entirely new population from those seen at 2:15 P. M. They were leaving at an estimated rate of 600 an hour.

I found nine dead under the wires at West Bay bridge, two dead at Rogers bridge and eight at Ponquogue bridge, the latter near Shinnecock Inlet. One was still alive with one wing entirely sheared off and three, stunned by hitting the wires, were banded and released.

I estimated that I saw 3,728 Phalaropes from 1:45 P. M. to 7:00 P. M. on April 29. On April 30, at 5:30 A. M., there were only 12 at West Bay bridge, eight at Rogers bridge, 40 at Ponquogue bridge and 20 at Shinnecock Inlet. There were 18 in the ocean off Mecox Bay at 7:15 A. M. April 30 began cloudy with a moderate north wind and no fog. At 2:00 P. M., clear, with a light north wind, there were five at West Bay bridge, seven at Rogers bridge, two flying east over the ocean in five minutes, and by 3:00 P. M. six were seen at Shinnecock Inlet.

At 4:10 P. M. I left Shinnecock Inlet on a trawler and went three and one-half miles out into the ocean, returning at 5:25 P. M. There were four flocks in the water from the Inlet to one-half mile offshore comprising 111 individuals. The following flocks, all flying south away from the land, were: thirty, five, five, twelve, thirty-two, twelve, five, four, four, six, three, eight, four, (one individual) and four. There were 150 in the bay near the inlet after returning at 5:25 P. M., making a total count of 396.

The ocean was not rough as it had been on the 28th and 29th. There was a north wind all day, but there was still a little roll, or swell, on the ocean. On May 1, with a light south wind, 11 were feeding in the surf near Tiana Coast Guard station at 2:00 P. M., 13 in the surf at Ponquogue bridge and six at Shinnecock Inlet. On May 2 there were seven in the surf near Tiana Coast Guard station at 3:00 P. M. On May 3 the only ones seen were three in the surf at Tiana station.

In all of the above observations the flocks were comprised of about 90 percent Red Phalaropes and 10 percent Northern. Only about 20 percent of the Reds were in full breeding plumage. On May 7 at 3:00 P. M., there were 572 Northern and Red Phalaropes, as follows, all in the surf: 93 in one-half mile west of Tiana Station, 64 in one-half mile east of Tiana Station, 115 in one-half mile at Ponquogue bridge and 300 near Shinnecock Inlet, also about 90 percent Reds and 10 percent Northern.

The last seen was a flock of 12 on May 8 at 6:00 P. M., just off Shinnecock Inlet, by the fisherman who took me out on the ocean in the trawler.

For the seven days of my observations I saw an estimated 3,955 Reds and 943 Northern. This is the third and probably the largest flight of Phalaropes recorded in New York State. In the 1958 flight I did not observe any dead jellyfish on shore as I did on April 28, 1937 when I estimated there to be 1,500 Reds and 500 Northern, which was the first large flight recorded for Long Island. In this flight I caught four in a trap baited with jellyfish and also caught two with a scoop net. All six were banded and released. Up to that time, according to the records, only four others had been banded in North America. The additional three banded in 1958 make nine now banded by me. A search revealed that at the present time only 31 have been banded in North America with the others as follows: Alaska, 10; California, two; Kansas, nine and Kentucky, one.

The only other large flight of Phalaropes for Long Island was 3,000 at East Hampton on May 16, 1939 by the late Dr. William T. Helmuth. I believe these were not all Reds but think some were Northern. I can find no record of Phalaropes being driven ashore in numbers between Florida and Long Island. If a storm should hit the birds as they are migrating north they are apparently just driven ashore from their feeding grounds. In 1937 and 1958 they were about 70 miles east of New York City, or the mainland; and in 1939 they were about 100 miles east of New York City. — LeRoy Wilcox, Speonk, Long Island.

A Partially Albino Chickadee — On February 1, 1959 at Selkirk Shores State Park in Oswego County at the mouth of the Salmon River, hearing chickadees in the mixed hemlock-hardwood growth about 50 feet in from the Lake Ontario shore bluffs, I stopped to "spish" them in hopes of attracting a Red-breasted Nuthatch or kinglets. A few moments of "spishing" drew about a half-dozen chickadees toward me since the wind was only moderate. I turned to see what birds had approached from behind, and I noted a bird facing me perched on a twig and hammering a seed. In the first instant I couldn't identify it by color pattern as any local species, but then recognized from its size, shape, and actions that it was a chickadee. Its gray back and light buffy-gray belly feathers were pigmented normally as far as I could tell with the bird facing me. The coloration of these parts contrasted in a unique way with the cap and throat. The crown, chin, and throat were **white** except for a narrow fringe of black between the throat and the normal gray chest. The lighting was good as I looked north at the bird at about 3:00 P. M. of a clear day. The Chickadee flew before I could observe the albinism in more detail. — Margaret S. Rusk, 100 Stadium Place, Syracuse 10.

Hawk Owl in Jefferson County — On December 11, 1958 I saw a Hawk Owl in the town of Lyme, about three miles northeast of Three Mile Bay. The bird was identified after being studied at close range under good light conditions. It remained in the same area until the end of December and was seen by a number of people.

The Hawk Owl is considered a rare and irregular late fall and winter visitor in New York State, most reports coming from the northern and central counties. The only other recent record for the state that has come to my attention is a bird seen in Saratoga County on December 20, 1955 (**Audubon Field Notes**), Vol. 10, No. 3, p. 237.

Due to its diurnal habits and fondness for open country the Hawk Owl lends itself to easy observation. The paucity of recent records for the state suggests that it may be the rarest of the northern owls which penetrate our borders during cold weather. — John B. Belknap, 92 Clinton Street, Gouverneur.

A Note on the Roosting Behavior of the Brown Creeper — The Brown Creeper is a rather common winter bird in the wooded areas of western New York. On January 31, 1959, four to six creepers were observed feeding in a mixed hemlock-deciduous woodland in Wilson Cemetery bordering the southern shore of Lake Ontario, Niagara County. They were observed in company with Golden-crowned Kinglets for nearly an hour in late afternoon by a party consisting of Miss M. Edna Blowers, Mr. Arthur R. Clark, Mr. Anthony Krayna and the writer.

At 4:05 P. M. (EST), while we were standing near an abandoned house on the edge of the woodland, a creeper flew past us and landed on the shingles which covered the house. Upon further investigation we saw that the creeper had moved upward to a corner made by two walls directly under the eaves. The bird used its tail as a prop while the bill rested on a painted board about one-fourth inch higher than the shingled surface. The paint on this board was chipped off in the area where the bill was placed, thus indicating the possibility that this exact roost was used on previous occasions.

Further inspection of this roosting area revealed no additional creepers. However, at 4:25 P. M. (EST), a second creeper landed on the shingled surface on the opposite side of the house. This bird proceeded to move upward and take a position similar to that of the first bird in the opposite corner of the house. The body of the second bird rested on a mud wasps' nest.

No further activity was noted and our presence within four feet was completely ignored by both birds. The light intensity was considerably lower under the eaves than in the surrounding open woodland when the birds first came into these roosting areas. Both roosting places were well sheltered from a steady north-northwest wind. (Editor's note — On June 24, 1950 I observed a Brown Creeper's hiding place back of a window shutter. The bird climbed up to the second floor level of a lodge that was adjacent to pine woods. It moved up on the shingles until it reached a point exactly half-way between two windows. Then it sidled toward the left one, where the blind had been opened back against the house, and disappeared behind it). — Richard C. Roscge, 48 Dartmouth Avenue, Buffalo 15.

The Behavior Pattern of some Ruffed Grouse chicks in captivity (Part II) — It is now pertinent to remark about the sequence of moulting from the juvenile form to the first year adult form. This is a somewhat slower procedure than in Pheasant chicks of the same age. The body feathers arrive first, and they grow slowly while the primary feathers of the wings develop fully. Then the "forest strewn-floor" pattern that we have come to recognize comes into full bloom over the backs of the birds. The breast feathers come in much lighter in color than in the juvenile stage. Feathers begin to appear on the lower legs, and webbing on the toes becomes evident.

At age four months the birds were still relatively tame, and after some coaxing they could be picked up and held. Their consumption of food was tremendous, indicating a higher metabolism than a Pheasant would perhaps have. I make this comparison with Pheasants because I have raised many of them. The birds were kept in a large enclosed area (the old Pheasant yard) where they had as companions two old Canada Geese. After an initial period of resentment on the part of the Geese, the five birds got along well. The food of the Grouse consisted of grasshoppers, worms, varied insects, apples, wild grapes (fruits are taken to them), sweet corn on the cob, and turkey mash in pellet form. They still did not seem to require much water, even on the hottest and driest days. They were more prone to dusting than Pheasants in similar circumstances and delighted in stretching full length in a dust wallow in the bright sun.

As I mentioned earlier the birds would, during the early part of their captivity, run and hide and remain motionless for several minutes at the sound of our dog's

bark. Slowly, however, the birds became used to **his** bark and did not run and hide, although they kept a wary eye open just the same. If **another** dog were to bark, they would dash away for cover immediately. Therefore they can and do learn by association the difference between relative sounds.

As the Grouse grew older, they no longer came to a call which was a low whistle, having apparently attained a certain degree of independence on their own in the larger yard. Their curiosity, however, often prompted them to stalk sedately to you, to see what delicacy you might have brought. Blackberries were considered the peak of delicacies when they were in season. After that it was tough old sweet corn fed on the cob. I suggest that many a farmer with a marginal corn field has blamed some damage to the grain on everything else but the Ruffed Grouse, but I now know that a Grouse is capable of ruining an ear of corn on the stalk as easily as a racoon, squirrel, or Pheasant.

Plump and dainty these three birds have won their way into our hearts, and it will be with reluctance that we will turn them loose in some remote area away from man and **after** the hunting season. The ability of Ruffed Grouse to hide in the wild state has always amazed me. Upon being flushed, they burst out in a flurry of feathers, like some rocket, this being to the complete consternation of my reflexes as a hunter and to the utter resignation of my dog that I was not a very good wing shot. I could never quite fathom the telepathy with which they communicated a potential danger to one another over comparably vast distances and under the most adverse conditions until I elected to undertake the task of raising these orphans. Now I know how it is done, and it is one of nature's own secrets open to me for the first time. Rare is the time you have approached a Ruffed Grouse undetected, and observed the bird before it saw you.

A friend of mine recently came to call, and I was so intent on watching the birds that I did not see nor hear him come. When he saw me down in the yard and started toward me, the birds were in the deep grass chasing grasshoppers and other food. They could not have seen him coming. I don't know how close my visitor was before the three birds scooted to a quick halt and assumed the motionless stance of intimate hiding reserved for real danger. This was accompanied by an almost imperceptible danger alarm which sounded as a drawn-out "took-took". As my visitor continued to approach, the birds' actions indicated they were still communicating, but the sounds were too low for my ear to interpret.

I have enjoyed immensely and gotten considerable knowledge from the raising of these Ruffed Grouse. I would wish others to have such a heart-warming and educational experience in nature's world — Tom Lesperance, Keeseville.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WINTER SEASON DECEMBER 1 — MARCH 31

JAMES K. MERITT

The various regional editors were generally agreed that the winter season really did provide winter weather. Snowfall was excessive in all areas of the state except the extreme southeastern part. The storms and blizzards in the Oswego area, particularly early in the winter, made national headlines. Either because of the weather or in spite of it, the season provided generally interesting birding. In this the regional editors were also agreed. The season's birds can be split into four distinct and separate categories: (1) late fall migrants or winter holdovers, (2) regular winter birds, (3) accidentals or strays into the state, and (4) early spring arrivals.

Among the late holdovers of note were a Blackpoll Warbler found dead in Westchester County and a Parula Warbler found in a weakened condition at Endwell in Region 4. Both of these records are remarkable. Yellow-breasted Chats were in Regions 9 and 10. Late Brown Thrashers were found in many areas. Robins put in a good late and mid-winter showing, and

three were even seen in the central Adirondacks in February. There were more Towhee reports than normal.

The Evening Grosbeak flight was in most areas only a moderate one, and the other winter finches, i. e. Pine Grosbeaks, Redpolls, Pine Siskins, and Crossbills, were reported in even lighter numbers. Late in the season, however, Purple Finches were very conspicuous in most areas. The flight of Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Shrikes, and Snow Buntings was generally poor, and there were relatively few Snowy Owl reports. There was the usual smattering of reports of the Oregon Junco. Red-breasted Nuthatches were scarce in most areas, although Region 7 was an exception. One of the winter's rarities was a Hawk Owl seen in the Watertown area. The Barrow's Goldeneye was again observed in Region 8 and this season also brought a report from Region 1. White-winged gulls were scarce throughout the state, but of note among the gull group were a Little Gull and Lesser Black-backed Gull on Long Island and a Franklin's Gull in Region 5. There were only three or four reports of the Three-toed Woodpecker.

Among the real strays into the area was a European Redwing seen in December on Long Island. And a Varied Thrush, a visitor from the west, was collected in the Watertown area (I would hope that Watertown would save a few of its ornithological highlights for the Federation meeting). A Bullock's Oriole, another westerner, put in an appearance at a feeder in Region 9.

Early Bluebird reports indicated more observations than last year, but they were not otherwise encouraging. It will probably take several years at least to make up last year's losses. Snow geese were seen late in the period along the central Hudson, and a few were also noted in Region 3.

REGION 1—NIAGARA FRONTIER

ROBERT F. ANDRLE

The cold and snow of late November continued through December which proved to be the coldest since 1917. On twenty-six days in the month the average temperature was below normal (maximum -17° on Dec 21). Although precipitation was below normal near Buffalo, heavy snowfall was experienced in the plateau area with considerable drifting and poor visibility. Sunshine, however was plentiful with twelve days of the month having over 75 per cent of the possible. The January average temperature was the same as that in December (22.3°F), but this was only 3.2° below normal compared to 6.7° in December. Total precipitation in January was 6.47 inches, a new all-time record for the month. It was a severe month weather-wise and a thaw during the 21st to the 23rd caused floods which resulted in heavy damage. Wintry conditions continued through February and March with the former averaging about normal in most respects and having no periods of unusual weather. Ice formed early on Lake Erie and accumulated steadily through most of the period. Lake Ontario had one of the widest sections of shore ice that has ever been observed by the writer. The ice bridge at Niagara Falls build up soon after mid-December and remained solid until it showed signs of breaking up in late March. The last month of the period was in marked contrast to the quiet weather of March 1957

and 1958. The total snowfall (29.2 inches) was the third greatest on record for the month. Several gales, notably on the 6th and 7th and the 15th and 16th, caused considerable damage. The temperature for the month averaged only 2° below normal but an indication of the harsh weather during the period was given by the fact that the first minimum temperature above 32° F since Dec 4, 1958 was not recorded until Mar 20. Bird activity during the period was interesting in that half-hardy species were at least as numerous, if not more so, than in other winters. The great numbers of gulls on the Niagara River decreased significantly during December with the continued cold weather and icing conditions. White-winged gulls were not so numerous as they have been in other winters and very few of the "puzzling" individuals were noted. No great influx of northern fringillids materialized but Evening Grosbeaks were numerous. Oregon Juncos turned up perhaps more frequently than at any time previously.

Loons — Ducks: Only a few Common Loons were reported on the Niagara River in December and one in January. The first migrants appeared in March as usual. A Red-throated Loon off Athol Springs on Lake Erie Dec 4 (Bourne), and another on the Niagara River Jan 3 (Coggeshall et al) were noteworthy. About Dec 12 several Horned Grebes were picked up on the ground in scattered inland localities, possibly the result of certain weather conditions which are not apparent from the data at hand. During March an unprecedented number of Red-necked Grebes occurred mostly on the Niagara River, the maximum number in one day being about 45 on Mar 22 (Axtells). Only one Great Blue Heron was reported before March; this was a single bird flying over Elma on Jan 18 (Gampp). Black-crowned Night Herons were noted as usual in Buffalo through the winter. The first American Bittern reported was at Frewsburg on Mar 30 (Knott, Anderson). Whistling Swans first appeared at Celeron Mar 9 (Beal) with a flock of 55 and thereafter occurred frequently all over the region including two flocks of 175 and 280 individuals. Canada Geese were first reported on Feb 16 when 75 were sighted at Jamestown (Brolin rep. Anderson). They had reached a maximum of about 7,800 in the Wolcottsville - Oak Orchard Swamp region by the end of March (Brockners). A male Green-winged Teal apparently remained in Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo from late December to mid-February; an American Widgeon appeared there Jan 1 (Brockners). Surface feeding ducks arrived at normal times but their numbers were low, especially in the Oak Orchard Swamp and sink areas where ice remained until the end of the period. A very interesting observation on Mar 29 was a Green-winged Teal-Common Teal hybrid on a sink near Clarence (Nathan, Axtels). Diving ducks seemed to be in normal abundance on the Niagara River and Lake Ontario through the winter. An outstanding observation was a male Barrow's Goldeneye at Niagara Falls on Jan 3 (Andrie, Coggeshall, Axtell).

Hawks — Owls: A very early Turkey Vulture was reported over Olean Feb 28 (Meyer rep. Eaton). Red-tailed Hawks were noted in slightly more than average numbers through the period. However, Rough-legged Hawks were apparently very scarce, the only ones being reported were individuals at Lockport Dec 7 (Cornish rep. Broadbent), at Batavia Dec 19 (Buckland), and on Mar 15 at Newfane, (Lehrer). A Red-shouldered Hawk near Sturgeon Point on Jan 20 (Bourne) and another at Busti on Feb 28 (Anderson) were of interest, the latter possibly being an early migrant. Two reports of Bald Eagles were received, an adult at Greenhurst on Chautauqua Lake Dec 24 (Rhubottom) and an immature Mar 28 at Pinehurst on Lake Erie (Bourne). Marsh Hawks were not reported this winter except for two on Feb 12 at Williamsville (Rubach, Clark). Sparrow Hawks appeared to be more abundant than usual this winter in many locations. According to Eaton, Turkeys fed mainly on the good crop of beechnuts through the winter and were noted in small flocks throughout southern Cattaraugus County. Elderkin reported 20 at Allegheny State Park on Mar 1. The first Coot was observed at Celeron on Mar 14 (Elderkin). The only shorebirds in March other than Killdeer, American Woodcock, and Common Snipe, were two Pectoral Sandpipers reported from Frewsburg on Mar 29 (Anderson, Hiller). A Snowy Owl Feb 5 at Pinehurst on Lake Erie (Bourne) was the only individual of this species seen through the period.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Belted Kingfishers seemed to be mostly absent from the region this winter. The only reports before March were of one at Vandalia on Dec 24, two there on Jan 21, and two at Olean Dec 26 (Eaton). Several Yellow-shafted Flickers were observed in scattered localities. Of interest was the record of a Red-bellied Woodpecker Feb 1 and Mar 1 at Java Lake (Rosche, Blowers). Apparently this bird was present all winter. Two more of these woodpeckers were reported Mar 24 at Pavilion (Annabel rep. Rosche). Phoebe appeared from Mar 22 on. Four Horned Larks (*alpestris*) on Feb 11 at Bay View (Bourne) were unusual. No swallows were reported in March. Tufted Titmice continue to be observed regularly in widespread areas but the Carolina Wrens were little in evidence in the region. The only reports were on Jan 4 at Jamestown (Raistrick rep. Anderson) Mar 8 at Angola (Brockners) and Mar 19-31 at Chautauqua Lake (Knott, Mealy). A Mockingbird appeared Dec 31 at Snyder and was still there at the end of the period (Knox et al). Another was seen Dec 3 at Niagara Falls and on Mar 26 at the same place (Heilborn). On Dec 18 and 28 a Mockingbird was observed at Lakewood, Chautauqua County (Beal et al). Robins wintered in a number of localities in the region. On Jan 25 and Feb 22 individual Hermit Thrushes were noted (Rosche, Clark, et al) on Grand Island. In the same place a Brown Thrasher was found on Jan 25 by these observers. Another Thrasher which probably wintered was seen on Feb 12 and 28 at Williamsville (Clark, Rubach). Bluebirds continued rather scarce, the first not appearing until Mar 18 in Hamburg (Bourne).

Vireos — Warblers: At least 11 Myrtle Warblers were located in the vicinity of bayberry bushes and evergreens on Jan 4 near Alden (Wolfling). Ten were noted at the same place on Feb 14 (Andrle, Thill). One Myrtle Warbler was seen for three days in Dec in Wellsville (Davie rep. Maddren) and another was observed at Corwin Jan 12 (Léhrer).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Redwinged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Brown-headed Cowbirds wintered in a number of widespread localities. One Rusty Blackbird remained near a feeding station from Dec 2-20 at Hamburg (Avery, Bourne). The first migrants of this species was a flock of 25 at Chautauqua Lake Mar 19 (Anderson). American Goldfinches seemed to be more numerous than usual while a few small flocks of Pine Siskins were reported through the period. The only White-winged Crossbills to appear were eight near Vandalia Dec 26 (Eaton), five at Youngstown Feb 1 (Wendlings), and one on Mar 22 at Allegheny State Park (Wheeler rep. Rosche). Rufous-sided Towhees were reported from four places in the region during December and January. Vesper, Savannah, Field, and Fox Sparrows appeared during the last week in March. A male Oregon Junco came to a feeder at Lewiston all through the period (Klabundes et al), while another appeared from Jan 22 to Feb 14 at a feeding station in Kenmore (Webster et al). Several others were reported from various places in the region. An unusual occurrence was that of a Chipping Sparrow at a feeder from Jan 1 to at least Mar 1 in East Aurora (Loersch rep. Rosche). Single White-crowned Sparrows appeared at three feeding stations in Hamburg and East Aurora through most of the period. In Dec and Jan from two to three White-throated Sparrows were observed at a feeder in Hamburg (Bacon, Bourne). On Jan 31 a Swamp Sparrow was seen at Wilson (Rosche et al). Also at Wilson a flock of 200 Lapland Longspurs on Jan 11 was most interesting and from 12 to 15 were also reported from the Youngstown area on Feb 15 (Vanderbles et al).

Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo

REGION 2 — GENESEE

HOWARD S. MILLER

This area experienced a real old-fashioned winter. The snowfall was within one inch of the greatest total ever recorded in this region. While the lowest recorded temperature was -2°, temperatures averaged below normal most of the time. However, occasional brief thaws prevented as heavy an accumulation of snow on the ground as was present during the winter a year ago. Pheasants seemed to have come through the winter in good shape, and

some at least of the semi-hardy species wintered successfully. The northern finches made a rather poor showing, only the Evening Grosbeak and Pine Siskin being regularly reported. The northern white-winged gulls were also scarce. In spite of the fact that the winter's heaviest snowfalls came late (19 inches on March 13 and 9 inches on March 27), the spring migration seemed more advanced than last year.

Loone — Ducks: Two Common Loons on Conesus Lake Dec 6 (GOS hike) were the last seen for the period. A single Red-throated Loon on March 31 at Webster Park (Kemnitzer) was the only report of this species. A Red-necked Grebe was present on Irondequoit Bay from Mar 8 to 14, and 38 were seen Mar 31 at Webster Park (Kemnitzer). Twelve Horned Grebes were seen on Canandaigua Lake Jan 18 (Whites), about six wintered on Sodus Bay (G. Jones), and a very few were reported along Lake Ontario. No Pied-billed Grebes were reported. A single Gannet was seen Dec 7 near the Russell Station (W. Lloyd). Eight Great Blue Herons were noted Mar 26 at 1000 Acre Swamp (Kemnitzer), and a wintering bird was seen in Pittsford Feb 3 (Cameron). No other herons were reported during the period. Last spring Whistling Swans were almost unreported in this area. This spring, however, there was a heavy flight, peak numbers being 58 Mar 21 at Ducand (Tanghe), 191 on Mar 22 at Braddock's Bay by the same observer, and 220 Mar 23 in the same place (L. Moon). The spring flight of Canada Geese seemed about overage. Some Mallards and Black Ducks were the only wintering "puddle" ducks except for a single Green-winged Teal seen Dec 21 and Feb 22 at Ling Road and a Wood Duck Dec 21 at Irondequoit Creek (Klonick). Three Blue-winged Teal were seen Mar 28 at Sandy Creek (O'Hara et al). Nine Shovellers and 30 Ring-necked Ducks were seen Mar 21 at Sodus Bay (GOS hike). Some 300 Redheads and 130 Canvasbacks were on Canandaigua Lake Jan 18 (Dakin), and 50 of the former and 60 of the latter were seen Jan 25 on Sodus Bay (E. Brown, Miller). 2500 Common Goldeneyes were seen Jan 18 in the Manitou area (Listman). A flock of about 20 Buffleheads wintered at Rigney's Bluff. 5000 Oldsquaws on Dec 31 and 2000 on Mar 26 along the east lake shore (Kemnitzer) are high counts for this species. Some 1000 White-winged Scoters Dec 31 and 750 Mar 26 in the same area and by the same observer are also noteworthy totals. Ten Surf and two Common Scoters were seen Dec 2 at Oklahoma Beach (Listman). A Ruddy Duck was noted Jan 18 at Summerville (Rising). Four Hooded Mergansers were seen at Sodus Bay Mar 21 (GOS hike).

Hawks — Owls: A Goshawk seen Dec 11-14 in Powder Mill Park (Whites, Dakins, Zeitler) was the year's first record of this bird. Redtailed Hawks were rather common this winter. A fairly good early hawk flight under favorable wind conditions Mar 20 brought 30 Red-shouldered Hawks in addition to some of the other early migrating species along the west lake shore (Starling). Rough-legged Hawks were rather scarce this winter. A Pigeon Hawk was reported from the vicinity of her feeder at Avon during December (Haller). Twelve Ruffed Grouse were seen at Canadice Lake Dec 27. Twelve American Coots were at Canandaigua Lake on Jan 18 (Dakin). A Killdeer was seen Dec 21 at Charlotte (Tanghe) and the first migrants were three birds reported Mar 1 at Conesus Lake (W. Lloyd). The first American Woodcock was reported Mar 20 from Hamlin (GOS hike).

A single Glaucous Gull was seen Feb 4 at Summerville (Starling), and another was seen Feb 15 at Sodus Bay (E. Brown, Miller). An Iceland Gull was noted Feb 28 on the Genesee River (Starling, Miller). Six Mourning Doves were seen at Powder Mill Park Dec 11 (Starling) and 18 at Avon Jan 15 (Haller). In addition, about 30 birds of this species frequented the feeders north and northwest of Rochester. The Snowy Owl was reported Jan 20 and 26, Feb 8 and Mar 5 and 19 from Braddock's (Listman et al). These reports apparently represent two birds, a large dark one and a smaller whiter one. Two Long-eared Owls were seen Feb 7 in heavy evergreen growth on Frisbee Hill Road (Starling, Miller). A few Short-eared Owls wintered around Braddock's with the maximum number of eight being seen Mar 28 (Tanghe, Listman). This last figure may in part represent migrating birds. A Saw-whet Owl was observed Dec 29 in Penfield (Listman).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: The Belted Kingfisher was seen Dec 21 and Jan 21 at Powder Mills Park (Starling), Dec 21 at Irondequoit Creek (Miller), and Mar 21 at Summerville (Starling, Miller). The last bird may well be a migrant. The

Yellow-shafted Flicker was noted Jan 3 in Irondequoit (O'Hara et al). Three birds were seen Jan 15 at Avon (Haller), and two birds were noted in Reed Road Swamp Feb 8 (Kirvin). Five Pileated Woodpeckers were seen in the "upland lakes" area Dec 27 (Christmas census), two were seen Jan 2 at Avon (Haller), one was observed Jan 21 at Powder Mill Park (Starling), and still another was seen four times during the period on the east side of Irondequoit Bay (Sunderlin). Ten Red-bellied Woodpeckers were seen Jan 15 at Avon (Haller) and one was noted Jan 4-31 at Pelleth Road (Starling, Miller). A Red-headed Woodpecker was seen Jan 31 at Avon (Haller). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen Dec 6 and Feb 1 in the Reed Road area (Kirvins) and another bird was seen Dec 11 and Jan 25 in Powder Mill Park (Starling, Listman, Brown). The only Phoebe reported was a bird seen Mar 31 at Honeoye Lake (Listman). Fifty Horned Larks were noted in Webster Jan 17 (McNetts).

A maximum of eight Tufted Titmice spent the winter around feeders on the east lake shore. This species seems to be well established in that area. Twelve Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen Dec 14 in Durand (Dobson). Brown Creepers seemed more common than usual this past winter. No Carolina Wrens were reported. A Brown Thrasher was seen Dec 17 in Powder Mill Park (Starling) and again on Feb 15 in the same place (Kirvin, Starling). Forty-five Robins were noted Dec 21 (Christmas census), but only a few of these spent the entire winter in the area. Two Bluebirds were seen Dec 29 in Powder Mill Park (Starling). The first migrant appeared Mar 21 at Manitou (GOS hike). Twelve Bohemian Waxwings were seen in Duran Dec 21 (Christmas census). Four birds seen Jan 4 (Whites, Miller) was the last report of these unusual visitors. Northern Shrikes were regular but rather scarce this winter, not more than one appearing on any single report. Two Loggerhead Shrikes seen on Mar 21 (GOS hike) were the first of the season.

Vireos — Sparrows: A Myrtle Warbler was seen Dec 6 and Feb 8 at Cedar Springs (Starling, Kirvins), and four were noted in Durand Dec 21 (Christmas Census). These latter birds were not reported subsequently. A Yellowthroat was seen Dec 21 at Ling Road (O'Hara), and another was seen Jan 11 at Powder Mill Park (Starling). An Eastern Meadowlark was noted Dec 7 at Ling Road (Zeitler), and eight were observed on Mar 20 migrating at Braddock's Bay (Starling). About 1000 Redwinged Blackbirds were seen Mar 20 at Braddock's (Listman). For the second straight year a Baltimore Oriole was reported on the Christmas census, a bird being present in Irondequoit from Dec 1-21 (Leubner et al).

A single Rusty Blackbird was noted Mar 1 at Ling Road (Brown and Miller), and another was seen Mar 28 at Manitou (O'Hara et al). Ten Brown-headed Cowbirds were seen at a feeder in Irondequoit Feb 8 (Denison). A record number of 91 Cardinals was reported on the Dec 21 Christmas census. Evening Grosbeaks seemed to be mostly confined to the east lake shore, where flocks of up to 75 were reported from the McNett and Sunderlin feeders. Fifteen Purple Finches from Durand Mar 8 (Davis) was the high count for the area. The Pine Grosbeak was entirely absent, and the only Common Redpolls reported were two birds in Webster Dec 21 and four Mar 31 in Irondequoit (L. Moon). Pine Siskins were regular in medium flocks, the largest being one of 30 birds in Durand Mar 22 (Dobson, Tanghe). A flock of 150 Goldfinches was seen Jan 21 on Pelleth Road (Starling, Miller).

Four White-winged Crossbills were noted Dec 13 at Pelleth Road (Kemnitzer and Listman). A Rufous-sided Towhee was reported all of December at Durand, and two birds were also seen at Pelleth Road throughout the same month (Kemnitzer). One of these birds was still present Mar 1 (Suber et al). An immature White-crowned Sparrow appeared Jan 17 at the McNett feeder just north of Irondequoit Bay and was still present Mar 31. This is our first winter record for this species. Nineteen White-throated Sparrows were seen Dec 21 (Christmas census), and many of these wintered successfully. Some 105 Song Sparrows were noted Dec 21 (Christmas census) with one observer (Tanghe) recording 78 along a stretch of the lower Genesee River. Lapland Longspurs were reported in small flocks, the largest being one of 15 birds seen in Webster Mar 29 (Davis). The largest flock of Snow Buntings reported was one of 300 in Webster, also on Mar 29 (Davis).

61 Richland St., Rochester 9

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

SALLY F. HOYT

This winter offered strange and interesting contrasts with last winter. We shuddered, as December wore on, wondering if it was a promise of a year worse than last. Heavy snows and record-breaking low temperatures for the month covered natural food early and drove waterfowl from small lakes and ponds onto large ones farther south. Horned Grebes were caught by the early freeze-up. The first part of January was similar — then came a thaw, with floods on Jan 22, removing almost entirely the snow cover. February and March had below normal temperatures, but almost no snow. Consequently the birds were able to find plenty of food to provide the needed heat and energy, and probably made out better than in 1958. Frost penetrated deep into the ground, and it remains to be seen if there will be much plant damage from winter "burn" and drying conditions.

Among winter visitors, there were few Snowy Owls, Northern Shrikes and Rough-legged Hawks. Purple Finches, Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks were our winter finches this year, but not in record-breaking numbers by any means.

Loons — Ducks: Again there have been very few reports of Loons. Four Red-necked Grebes were seen on Cayuga on Mar 31 (D. McIlroy). Many Horned Grebes were trapped by early freezes, and, weakened by lack of food, "crash-landed" in odd places. At least four were brought to the Laboratory of Ornithology in December and January. A Pied-billed Grebe was found on the street in Waterloo on Mar 17 and was banded and released by Jayson Walker. A Great Blue Heron was seen at Montezuma on Jan 31, and from then on an occasional one was seen until this species became common in late March. Of interest is the appearance of Whistling Swans in the region this spring. On Mar 9 five were reported flying over the Refuge Main Pool at Montezuma, and others were seen from that date until the end of March, the largest number being 16 on Mar 26. Other small groups were seen on Cayuga Lake, one remained near Penn Yan on Keuka in March and early April (Lerch), and four stopped off at the south end of Seneca the last week in March.

Due to the early severe winter conditions, all geese, except for two Canadas that joined the captive flock, left Montezuma during the first week of December (quite in contrast to last year). Six Canadas arrived Feb 27. The numbers built up slowly, until by Apr 1, 2500 geese were roosting nightly on the ice of the Main Pool. Old-timers said they had never seen as many Canada Geese on Cayuga Lake. Spofford estimated 20,000 on Mar 28, in the Farleys Point - Union Springs area, but this may not represent the peak count. Seven Snow Geese and one Blue were seen with the Canadas on Mar 31 (D. McIlroy) and there were other reports of one and two at a time for several weeks.

Three Black Ducks were recorded on the Big Spring at Montezuma on Jan 1 and may have wintered there. Blacks came with Mallards in a mixed flock of up to 200, to feed daily at the Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary during the winter. Ward reported Blacks in good numbers on Seneca on Dec 28. There were four Blacks on the Conhocton River at Avoca on Mar 22 (Carter). A female American Widgeon appeared some days at Sapsucker Woods in the early part of the winter, and three males were seen on Mar 12; four were at Union Springs on Mar 14 (Spofford) and 21 at Watkins Glen on Mar 17-27 (Bardeen). The first Pintail was recorded at Montezuma on Feb 27, but one had been seen at the south end of Cayuga on Jan 12. An early Green-winged Teal showed up at Sapsucker Woods on Mar 9. A pair of Wood Ducks flew back and forth daily from the Stewart Park duck pond to Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary.

The cold early winter brought diving ducks in early and in good numbers on Cayuga, especially at the north end. For example, Scheider counted over 5,000 Red heads, mostly near Canoga, and 1300 Canvasbacks on the census on Jan 17. The total Region 3 count of these divers on the waterfowl census was 11,630 Redheads,

5,689 Canvasbacks and over 3,000 Scaup, the highest for these three species in some years. Canvasbacks and Redheads were not so common on Seneca at the first of the year (Ward), but increased in late February and early March, and 500 (mixed) were seen at the south end of Seneca at that time (A. Robinson). An early Ring-neck was seen by Spofford on Cayuga on Mar 8. Not as many Goldeneyes were reported on Cayuga as in other winters. Two Buffleheads were at Union Springs on Mar 14 (Spofford). There were no Old-Squaws on Keuka this year, but five were seen on Cayuga on Feb 22 (Walker) and more were reported as March wore on. Reports of Scoters were almost completely absent on all lakes. Fewer reports this winter of Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, although 14 Commons were seen on the Chemung River on Jan 1.

Manager Morse of the Montezuma Federal Wildlife Refuge reports that the first waterfowl census of the year, taken on Mar 20 there, showed: Mallards 18, Blacks 11, Pintail 6, American Widgeon 4, Shoveller 6, Ring-necks 43, Canvasback 1, Scaup 1, Bufflehead 3, Hooded Merganser 11, Common Merganser 2, Red-breasted Merganser 1, Goldeneyes 20. The peak for the period, during the week of Mar 22 to 28, showed: Mallards 450, Blacks 550, Pintails 550, Green-winged Teal 4, American Widgeon 700, Shovellers 2, Wood Ducks 8, Ring-necks 40, Scaup 7, Goldeneyes 15, Hooded Mergansers, 4, Red-breasted Merganser 1 (Total ducks 2,331).

Hawks — Owls: The Turkey Vulture was seen at Montezuma on Mar 31 (D. McIlroy). Again there have been almost no reports of Sharp-shinned Hawks, but one, possibly two, hung around the Aviary and feeding station at Sapsucker Woods Laboratory for a week in mid-January, as did a pair of Cooper's Hawks off and on during January and February. A Cooper's was seen at Avoca on Mar 20 and again Mar 30 (Carter). Red-tailed Hawks were reported regularly all winter. For example, the Laboratory of Ornithology census group tallied 14 of them on Jan 1. On Feb. 14 Spofford saw ten at Montezuma. Most interesting is the fact that Spofford also saw a pair nest-building in an oak near Union Springs on Feb 1. There was at least one egg in the nest on Mar 8, and the bird was incubating on Mar 14. This is the earliest egg date in Spofford's voluminous records. The first Red-shouldered Hawk returned to Sapsucker Woods on Mar 15. Compared to the last two years there were few Rough-legged Hawks this winter, although scattered reports came in, and Spofford saw four of them on Feb 14 at Montezuma. There was a small Hawk flight over Ithaca on Mar 24 — mostly Buteos and Sparrow Hawks. The pair of eagles at Montezuma was seen sitting on the nest on Nov 22, spotted briefly on Dec 13 (Morse), and then not reported again until Feb 22, when Spofford saw one over the storage pool. Two were present on Mar 14, and they were noted off and on at the nest in the next two weeks. They definitely were not incubating by the end of the month, although they have usually started sitting in late March in other years (Spofford).

An extremely interesting observation is reported by Manager Morse of Montezuma. On Mar 28 a first year Golden Eagle flew over the storage pond and was circled by the pair of White-headed Eagles. Morse at first thought the bird was a Rough-legged Hawk, but as the male White-head approached the other bird, it was evident that the newcomer was distinctly larger than the White-head, and was undoubtedly a Golden Eagle. This would be a first record of this species for the Cayuga Lake Basin. No reports of Peregrines. A Pidgeon Hawk was seen a little south of Branchport on Feb 3 (Spiker). None reported there last year.

Ruffed Grouse and Ring-necked Pheasants were scarce throughout the region, although the Chemung Valley census group reported seeing 24 Pheasants on Jan 1. Not one appeared in my hedges or yard all winter. Coots were missing from the south end of Cayuga this winter, except for an occasional individual. Twenty of them, however, were at the south end of Seneca from Feb 19 into March (Bardeen), and the first one appeared at Montezuma on Mar 14 (Morse).

Killdeer came in on time, in usual numbers. The first Woodcock at Ithaca was reported by Harold Cox on the Coddington Road on Mar 16, and this species has been reported at more stations this year than recently. The first one at Avoca was Mar 17 (Carter) and at Horseheads Mar 23 (Bates). An early report of a Pectoral Sandpiper is that from Avoca on Mar 26 (Carter).

No White-winged Gulls were reported this winter, but this may represent poor

coverage of the lakes and dumps. Great Black-backed Gulls were fewer at Ithaca — only nine seen on the Jan 1 census. One wintered at Watkins Glen on Seneca, and one was seen on Jan 18 at Penn Yan (Lerch et al). Until last year this Gull was a rare visitor on Keuka. The January first census at Ithaca likewise produced far fewer Herring Gulls (325) and somewhat fewer Ring-bills (8) than in past years (for example, in 1940 2500 Herring Gulls were counted).

Arthur Lane had a maximum number of 35 Mourning Doves at his station in Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary, as opposed to 60-80 the year before. In Avoca four appeared at a feeder on Mar 6. Screech Owls appeared to be scarce everywhere, and there were also fewer reports of Horned Owls. There was just one report of a Snowy Owl near Ithaca — in mid-January, on Hanshaw Road Extension (E. Adams). The Barred Owl was heard calling from time to time in Sapsucker Woods, and one was also reported from Mt. Pleasant, east of Ithaca, in January (L. Pearsall). A Long-eared Owl spent most of January and February on a slope behind Fernow Hall on the Cornell campus. Short-eared Owls were found by Scheider in the Canoga marshes on Jan 17.

Swifts — Shrikes: One wintering Belted Kingfisher was found, at Myers, on several occasions (D. G. Allen). Flickers wintered in small numbers, and came to feeders. Six were seen at once in Stewart Park in Ithaca in early January, feeding on wild fruits (Hoyt). Pileateds were reported at several new stations around Ithaca, and one pair appeared on the Cornell campus at intervals. One and possibly two Red-bellied Woodpeckers were seen regularly from Dec 14 on, in Stewart Park or just to the west, along Cayuga inlet, and these, with two found at Montezuma by W. Spofford, made a high count of probably four for the Ithaca census group on Jan 1. As the Cayuga Basin has not had the same number of Red-bellied Woodpeckers that the Onondaga region has had in the past couple of winters, this winter's report is encouraging. A Red-bellied was also found in Hornell from Nov 1 to Mar 30, in the same place as it was seen in 1951 (Groesbeck). In several areas it was noted that Downy Woodpeckers were scarcer this year. As Avoca this decrease was reported as 50 per cent (Carter).

Ithaca's first Phoebe was seen by Mrs. Doris Brann in Ellis Hollow on Mar 21. Prairie Horned Larks were not reported in January, but began appearing by the end of February, and on the weekend of Mar 27-30 were abundant.

Two most unusual reports are of Tree Swallows, in December and January. Jason Walker saw three of them on Dec 28, a few miles northwest of Waterloo, "insecting" over a small stream. They could not be found the next day. Twice during early January three were seen just north of Lyons (Spencer).

Most feeding station operators felt that Blue Jays had increased considerably, and I myself banded 12 in December and had one return of an old bird. And from my own observations around the countryside, Crows either have increased a lot, or have adopted new flight plans. Tufted Titmice were down slightly in numbers; one wintered on the Keuka College campus (Guthrie) and a few appeared at Ithaca feeders. There was a partial albino White-breasted Nuthatch at a feeder in Odessa in February (Graham). No reports of wintering Red-breasted Nuthatches. Brown Creepers fed regularly outside the Laboratory windows at Sapsucker Woods; elsewhere they were reported as scarce. There were fewer Carolina Wrens in the Ithaca region, but one wintered at Keuka successfully, one at Watkins Glen (Mrs. Louise Hope), one at Geneva (L. Ward) and one was seen by the Chemung Valley group on Jan 1. Winter Wrens were not reported from anywhere in the region. The Mockingbird was seen all winter at Esperanza (just north of Branchport), and one appeared for a short time at the Shepherd feeder at Ludlowville, then disappeared in January. A Brown Thrasher was seen in December in the Cornell Rose Garden (Gebhart).

Only one or two reports of Robins around Ithaca this winter, and few elsewhere in the region, except a "small flock" in the Glen area at Watkins Glen on Dec 7 (Brubaker). No Bluebirds by the end of March at Avoca, one at Reading Center on Mar 30 (Kopp), reported as scarce at Keuka (Guthrie), but cautiously we report that early Bluebirds have been somewhat more numerous this year in Ithaca area than last year (Hartshorne, Hoyt). Almost no Kinglet reports all winter. Cedar Waxwings were seen frequently and in numbers at Watkins Glen, Burdett, and

around Ithaca. Two Water Pipits were seen at Myers Pt., on Cayuga on Feb 28 and Mar 6 (Gebhart). A Northern Shrike spent the whole winter, through March, at the Gustav Swanson farm south of Ithaca and sang frequently. Spofford saw and heard one singing at Montezuma Feb 22 and again Mar 22, and one was seen n. e. of Sapsucker Woods on Jan 1 (A.A.A.). Otherwise unreported. A Loggerhead was seen at Horseheads on Mar 27 (Bates) and one near Sapsucker Woods Mar 31 (Hoyt).

Vireos — Sparrows: A Myrtle Warbler was seen near Seneca Lake at Watkins Glen on Dec 27 (Brubaker) and one at Indian Pines at the head of Keuka Lake on Jan 6 (Orcutt). Up to three were reported quite regularly in Stewart Park, Ithaca, all winter, but there were no feeding station reports this year.

The only winter Meadowlark report I received was of four near Interlaken on Jan 19 (Taylor Merrill), but they arrived in large numbers the last weekend in March. Only a couple of Redwings were seen during the winter, only a few Grackles, and no Rusties, but the wintering Icterid this year was the Cowbird. Everywhere in the region they were descending on feeders, especially in December and January. Malcolm Lerch banded almost 100 Cowbirds at Penn Yan in December. The Sapsucker Woods flock of 40 had dwindled to six or eight in early February, but I had 20 or so through February at Etna. An albino Cowbird was seen Jan 23 at Elmira (K. Fudge and Mary Smith). The first large flock of Grackles was reported Mar 3 (D. West). Cardinals were down somewhat in numbers in most places, although Mrs. Carter reports that they now seem well established at Avoca where none were known prior to 1948.

It was an odd year as far as Evening Grosbeaks were concerned, for while they were very abundant at some feeding stations, others, who normally have them in Grosbeak years, reported having none. They were much scarcer at Keuka and Penn Yan, but in fair numbers at Geneva, where sometimes they do not occur. At Avoca they were more numerous than they had ever been (Carter) and 100 Grosbeaks fed all winter at Hornell. They were at feeders in Odessa, Watkins Glen, and Montour Falls, but rarely at rural feeders there. My flock at Etna varied from 35-75, about the same as last year's.

The predominant Winter finch was the Purple Finch — although it was not until late January or early February that this was evident. Numerous calls were received at the Laboratory about "raspberry-colored birds" at feeders, and small flocks of them were found in sheltered areas. After Feb 15, they were found in small numbers at Avoca, and Hornell. Early in the reporting period, Pine Siskins were noted, but except at Keuka, there were not many of these later. The usual small flocks of Goldfinches occurred. The hoped-for Crossbill invasion did not occur, and Pine Grosbeaks were absent. There were just a few scattered reports of Redpolls. At least three Rufous-sided Towhees wintered in the region: one in Forest Home, Ithaca, one at Clifton Springs (Paris Trail) and one was seen Jan 1 at Elmira. A Vesper Sparrow was seen at Geneva Jan 12 (Smith). Juncos occurred in Avoca, where they do not usually winter (Carter), and they were in usual numbers elsewhere. Tree Sparrows were down in numbers at Ithaca, Etna, Keuka and Avoca. Mrs. Carter, at Avoca, reports that she fed 22 this winter, in contrast to her usual flock of 50, and that they were later in arriving, earlier in leaving. Julian Shepherd saw two Field Sparrows at Myers Pt. on Cayuga on Jan 8, and two were found at Elmira on Jan 1. One White-crowned Sparrow was seen in Geneva Dec 28 (P. Trail). Pair of White-throats were at the Huntington feeder east of Ithaca in December, one spent the first half of the winter at A. Lane's feeder at Sapsucker Woods, then disappeared, one was seen in Geneva on Jan 17 (Murden) and a one-legged one appeared in Trumansburg during January (Townsend). Lane had the first Fox Sparrow reported on Mar 21, four were seen at Hornell on Mar 28, none appeared at Avoca. While a flock of 100 Snow Buntings was seen at Reading Center on Dec 28, another flock of 100 at Watkins Glen on Mar 4 (Beardsley), and another at Geneva on Jan 5 (Peck), no large flocks appeared this year; the largest number I saw at one time was ten.

Addition: Omitted from my report from the fall season, and worthy of mention now, is a Goshawk seen by David Allen over Connecticut Hill on Nov 10.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

It has been a decidedly cold winter with little snow. The only major snow storm came March 11 and 12 when about twelve inches fell. About five inches on Jan 16 takes second place. At Norwich and Bainbridge ice was the major hardship. It was the second coldest December on record and the coldest month of the season. Freezing temperatures or lower occurred every day of the month in Binghamton and on only ten days did the temperature go above freezing at all. Consequently what little snow fell lasted a long time and there were one to five inches on the ground at all times. January was closer to normal but still averaged on the cold side. Snow cover was almost as persistent as in December but was reduced to a trace several times, although it never disappeared. February was close to normal in temperature but was remarkable for the lack of snow. On few days in the month was there more than a trace of snow on the ground. March brought more snow than any other month, mostly as a result of the one big storm, but there were several minor snowfalls, too. Temperatures, although averaging below normal, were high enough so there was appreciable snow cover only a few days at a time. The coldness of the winter was largely a matter of persistence and average, rather than extremes, since there were only four days when the temperature went below zero in Binghamton and only six days at the weather station at Broome County Airport during the whole period.

There was a good flight of "winter finches", mainly Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins and Goldfinches, but most other species were represented, too. There was also a pretty good representation of species that normally winter farther south. The most surprising were a Parula Warbler and a Baltimore Oriole, but the number of wintering Robins and Cowbirds was noteworthy, too. The relatively light snow cover and the good fruit and seed crop of last fall were, no doubt, responsible for all but the most startling of the "laggards", but the former condition did not produce the Rough-legged Hawk records one might expect. The persistence of the December snow cover, rather than its depth, probably caused them to move farther on early in the season. This has been one of the most interesting winter seasons in recent years.

Loons — Ducks: No Loons and only one Horned Grebe was reported during the period. The grebe was on the Susquehanna River at Endicott from Mar 15 to 20 (Misner). A Pied-billed Grebe on the Susquehanna just west of Endicott Jan 11 (Bemont), was likewise the only one reported. There were no reports of wintering Great Blue Herons. The first migrant of the species was at the Whitney Point Flood Control Dam Mar 25 (N. Washburn, H. Marsi, Doren).

Fifty-five Canada Geese at Whitney Point Mar 16 (Linaberry, Marsi), the first ones reported, and four flocks heard flying over Oxford the night of Mar 19 (Stratton) are the highlights of a somewhat late, but so far fairly heavy flight. Wintering Mallards were about normal — 350 at the Sherburne Game Farm (Whites) and the usual small numbers here and there on the rivers of the region. Wintering Black Ducks showed a similar pattern, except there were only about 70 at the Sherburne Game Farm and about 50 at a second "headquarters" on the Susquehanna River just inside the western city line of Binghamton. A distinct increase in the number of both species was apparent in the reports from most parts of the region about Mar 20. Our first American Widgeons were two at Greene Mar 22 (Bartlett, Gilbert, Maxon). Twenty were on Little York Lake, near Homer, Mar 28 (Gustafson) and twenty more were at Whitney Point Dam Mar 29 (Sheffields, E.

Washburn, Saunders). A Pintail on the Susquehanna at Endicott Mar 4 was our first (Misner). There were no more reported until Mar 25, but on Mar 29 there were over 50 at Whitney Point (Sheffields, E. Washburn, Saunders), an unusually large concentration for this species in this region. A lone Green-winged Teal wintered at the Sherburne Game Farm (Whites), but our first migrant was one at Greene Mar 22 (Bartlett, Gilbert, Maxon). A male Wood Duck was found at Chenango Valley State Park, near Binghamton, Dec 28 on the Christmas Census (Sheffields) and another Wood Duck wintered at the Sherburne Game Farm (Whites). Five migrants were at Greene Mar 22 (Bartlett, Gilbert, Maxon).

Three Redheads were found Jan 18, during the Waterfowl Census, on the Susquehanna just inside the western Binghamton City Line (Hannans) and have not been reported since. Ring-necked Ducks were first found at Whitney Point Mar 25 (Marsi, N. Washburn, Doren). Four Canvasbacks were on the Susquehanna west of Endicott Jan 11 (Bemont). There were also two Feb records; two on the 18th at Homer (Gustafson) and five at Endicott on the 25th (Misner), and two Mar records. A female Lesser Scaup was reported from Homer Feb 18 (Gustafson). Eight Lessers were at Endicott Feb 25 and 26 (Misner) and a number of Scaup sp? reports came in during March, usually of four to six birds. The 57 Common Goldeneyes recorded during the Waterfowl Census indicate a comparatively high wintering population this year. In the Binghamton area reports show a definite increase in numbers early in March that spread to the rest of the region during the latter half of the month. Only one Old-squaw reported; that one on Little York Lake at Homer (Gustafson). Two male Hooded Mergansers at Deposit Mar 17 (Wilson) were our first. Many more were reported before the end of the period, the best numbers being twenty or so near Greene Mar 22 (Bartlett, Gilbert, Maxon). The 149 Common Mergansers recorded during the Waterfowl Census is the lowest total in four years.

Hawks — Owls: There were several Sharp-shinned Hawks reported during the period, but only two Cooper's Hawks; one on the south side of Binghamton Jan 26 (Marsi) and one at Unadilla Mar 26 (Wisner). The pair of Red-tailed Hawks that have nested on Ingraham Hill, south of Binghamton, in the past are nesting there again this year (Howard) but no other nests have been located so far. A Red-shouldered Hawk near Binghamton Mar 19 (Marsi, Doren) was our first. On Mar 28, after a good look with special attention paid to the tail bars, a Buteo was identified as a Broad-winged Hawk (Sheffields). This is about two and a half weeks earlier than the previous earliest record, but in Eaton's "Birds of New York" four of the local lists, including Eaton's own, list earlier first dates. In spite of the generally open winter there were no Rough-legged Hawks reported. There were no Marsh Hawks reported between the one south of Binghamton Dec 1 (L. Mackey) and the one at Whitney Point Mar 16 (Linaberry, Marsi). There were several more reported after the latter date. Two Killdeer on Mar 1 were our first; one at Kattelville (Sheffields) and one at Chenango Valley State Park (E. Washburn, Doren). They did not become common until Mar 19. Woodcock were at Choconut Center Mar 24 (Sheffields). A Glaucous Gull was reported in a field near Preble, in Cortland Co., Feb 3 (Heppell). The 48 Herring Gulls recorded on the Binghamton Christmas Census is the highest count of the season. Ring-billed Gulls were not recorded until Mar 4 at Binghamton (Sheffields).

A Mourning Dove was found between Sidney and Unadilla Jan 12 (Wisner) and another was at Newark Valley Feb 28 (Loomis). The one at McGraw Mar 19 (Horak) is more representative of the beginning of the main migration. Except for the two recorded on the Binghamton Christmas Census, Screech Owls were unreported during the period. There were quite a few Horned Owls reported from various parts of the region. A Snowy Owl was seen near Lisle, in Broome Co., Mar 29 (Yeatman). There was another report of a "big, dirty white bird" Dec 30 from near Binghamton. A Barred Owl was seen near Deposit Dec 2 (Wilson). A Saw-whet Owl, unrecorded from the region in the last seven years, was seen Jan 6 and heard Feb 17 near Deposit (Wilson).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: There were several reports of Belted Kingfishers; only from Jan 19 to Mar 14 were we without them. Besides the four recorded on the Binghamton Christmas Census wintering Flickers were reported Jan 10 at Choconut Center (Sheffields) and Feb 15 in Binghamton (Doren). One at Kattelville Mar 1 may

have been a migrant but they were still not common at the end of the period. Pileated Woodpeckers were reported fairly frequently from several parts of the region and are apparently increasing. A Red-headed Woodpecker in a sugar bush at McGraw Mar 25 (Wilson) is believed to have been around all winter.

A Phoebe was seen just a few miles south of the Pennsylvania border Mar 21 (Washburns) but they were first seen on the New York side Mar 29, one near Windsor (Nielsons) and one near Maine (Beaver), but no more were found in the next two days. Horned Larks were inconspicuous until a flock of 30 was reported near the Broome County Airport Feb 5 but they were reported frequently after that. A flock of 25 reported from Bainbridge Mar 22 (E. J. Smith) was probably made up of either migrants or local birds whose nests were destroyed by the Mar 11 - 12 snowfall since actively nesting birds would probably be more dispersed. Five or so Tree Swallows seen at Windsor Mar 28 (Nielsens) were the only ones reported in March.

Blue Jays have been much more common than usual in Bainbridge (E. J. Smith), Unadilla (Wisner), Binghamton and Deposit (Wilson). Mr. Wilson banded 166 of them during the period. At Binghamton 299 were counted on the Christmas census where the previous high was 134 the Christmas of 1954. At Deposit Crows were also unusually common (Wilson). At Binghamton they were also quite common but not much more so than in previous peak years. At Unadilla Black-capped Chickadees were "not especially numerous" (Wisner) but in Binghamton the Christmas Census figures show a peak year — 459 as compared to the previous high of 412 the Christmas of 1957. A Tufted Titmouse has been around the house of Mr. S. Wilson near Deposit since Feb 16. On Mar 20 and again the next day a Tufted Titmouse was found near Willow Point, across the river from Johnson City, a new location (Washburns). Several Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported in late December and early January, the last one Jan 11 a little north of Binghamton (Benyi). They were next reported Mar 8 at Maine, in Broome Co., where four or more were found together (Beaver).

A Winter Wren was at Port Dickinson, just north of Binghamton, Dec 14 (Dechen) and one was found on the Binghamton Christmas Census at Chenango Valley State Park Dec 28 (Sheffields). At Norwich one was seen Jan 14, Feb 26 and Feb 27 (Whites). No Carolina Wrens. There were twenty-four reports of Robins from Dec 1 to Feb 28; seven in Dec, twelve in Jan and five in Feb. Only the reports of 16 in a flock just north of Binghamton in January (L. Young) and 10 - 15 in Unadilla from Feb 12 to 15 involved more than three birds. The one at Homer Feb 28 (Roy) was probably the first reported migrant. They could be seen in good numbers from Mar 8 on, but it wasn't until Mar 18 that they became really common. Four early Bluebirds were reported in Binghamton Feb 23 (P. Wall). They were next seen north of Binghamton Mar 20 (Marsi, Doren) and there have been a fair number of reports from several parts of the region since, but at Cortland, Deposit and Norwich, all areas covered by active observers, there were none reported before the end of the period. At Deposit Golden-crowned Kinglets were fairly common all winter (Wilson), but at Binghamton there were very few reported after Jan 4. On Dec 12 a Ruby-crowned Kinglet was at Port Dickinson (Dechen) and another was found on the Binghamton Christmas Census (Hannans). There were many reports of flocks of Cedar Waxwings numbering up to 72 birds in a flock until Jan 27; however a flock of 50 at Sidney Feb 16 (E. J. Smith) was the only report between Jan 27 and Mar 14. There were only seven Northern Shrike reports, four of them from Oxford (Stratton). An immature was banded Dec 10 at Deposit (J. Wilson) and one was collected near Oneonta Mar 21 (J. New). The other one was at Whitney Point Mar 25 (H. Marsi, N. Washburn, J. Doren).

Vireos — Warblers: On Dec 3 a Parula Warbler was found in Endwell in such a weakened condition that it could easily be caught by hand when cornered in a garage. It was kept in a cage inside the house and fed peanut butter, suet and meal worms. It apparently regained its strength but about a month later it weakened and died (Raiter). The specimen was turned over to Cornell University. A Myrtle Warbler was seen and heard singing in Cortland Mar 24 (Hall).

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Three reports of wintering Meadowlarks; one at Homer Dec 6 (Gustafson) was perhaps a late migrant, one at St. John's Pond north of Binghamton Jan 2 (Saunders) and one at Sidney Jan 18 (Wisner). The first spring

migrant was near Choconut Center Mar 1 (Sheffields). Reports were scattered until Mar 22 when a flock of 100 was found near Bainbridge (E. J. Smith) and from then on they were common. One Red-winged Blackbird stayed at Unadilla until Dec 3 (Wisner). No more until Feb 20 when one was in south Binghamton (Schmidt). Then Feb 28 some were at Newark Valley (Loomis) and three were at the IBM Country Club (Carter). After that they became numerous with the females appearing about Mar 22. A "nicely plumaged male" Baltimore Oriole was still at Unadilla Dec 14 feeding on apples left on the tree (Wisner). A Rusty Blackbird was found Dec 28 near Greene (Bartlett, Gilbert, Maxon) and another was at Norwich Dec 31 where it was seen again Jan 8 (Whites). The first reported spring migrant was at Greene Mar 22 (Bartlett, Gilbert, Maxon). Two Common Grackles were found on the Binghamton Christmas Census Dec 28 and two more were seen in Johnson City Jan 3 (Wilkins). There were no more until Mar 1 when two were at Endwell (Bemont). They became really common after Mar 21. There was an unusual number of winter Cowbird records. A flock of 30 was at Norwich Dec 20 (Whites), and another flock of 30 was at Maine Feb 22 (Beaver). A flock of about that number made irregular visits to a feeder in Binghamton most of the period (Morehouse). They were becoming numerous at Unadilla Mar 19 (Wisner). At Deposit 147 were banded during March (Wilson).

It was another big Evening Grosbeak year. At Cortland they were more common than last year (Gustafson), and at Deposit 780 were banded during the period (Wilsons). Around Binghamton they did not seem to be quite as common as last year and it was almost mid January before they were coming to feeders regularly. There have been many more reports than usual of Purple Finches around Binghamton all during the period. Total numbers were small during December, January and February but they were becoming more numerous during March. At Deposit 72 were banded during the period, 55 of them in March (Wilsons). They didn't appear at Unadilla until Feb 28 or at Oneonta until mid March (J. New). Some Pine Grosbeaks were just outside Oneonta at the end of February but then disappeared (J. New). A few were reported around Binghamton and Oxford in the middle of March. At the latter location a large noisy flock of mixed finches, including Pine Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins, Redpolls and perhaps Crossbills and Goldfinches, was observed feeding in the treetops of a birch, maple, hemlock woods (Stratton). There were no other reports of Redpolls during the period, but Pine Siskins have been quit common since five were found on the Binghamton Christmas Census Dec 28. Several rather large flocks were reported and on Mar 29 a "huge" mixed flock of Siskins and Goldfinches was found at Whitney Point (Sheffields, E. Washburn, Saunders). Goldfinches were unusually common throughout the period. 351 were recorded on the Binghamton Christmas Census. This compares with the previous high of 70 the Christmas of 1953. There have been a number of White-winged Crossbill reports from Norwich, Sherburne, Pitcher in Cortland Co., Oxford and Oneonta. The first ones were at Norwich Feb 17 (Whites). They were still present in several areas at the end of the period.

A Rufous-sided Towhee spent the winter at a feeder in Newark Valley (Durie) and another was found near Binghamton Mar 1 (H. Marsi). No more before the end of the period. Slate-colored Juncoes were about normal in numbers, but as usual were unevenly distributed so that at Bainbridge (E. J. Smith) and Unadilla (Wisner) they were rather scarce. Tree Sparrows were normal. There were three reports of wintering Field Sparrows; four Jan 11 west of Endicott with a flock of Tree Sparrows (Bemont), one at a feeder in Unadilla Jan 18 (Wisner) and one banded at Deposit Jan 27 (Wilsons). Dec 3 a White-throated Sparrow was banded in south Binghamton (H. Marsi). On Dec 28 one was found during the Binghamton Christmas Census at Chenango Valley State Park (Sheffields) and Jan 11 one was at a feeder in Endicott (Bemont). For the first time a Fox Sparrow was found on the Binghamton Christmas Census Dec 28 (Wilkins) and around the 10th of Jan one was at a feeder just north of Binghamton (Benyi). An unusually heavy Fox Sparrow migration was first recorded in Deposit Mar 12 (Wilsons) and has since spread to most other areas and lasted to at least the end of the month. Top count so far was twelve, some singing, at State Park Mar 21 (Sheffields). Most areas reported wintering Song Sparrows. The first one heard singing was at Endicott Feb 10 (Carter). They became common around Mar 8 at Binghamton. Small flocks of Snow Buntings were

reported all during the period. The largest flock reported was 200 or more at Unadilla Jan 7 (Wisner).

A report of a small flock of Red Crossbills at Sempronius, in Cortlad Co., on Nov 29 (Wilson) was received too late to go in the last issue.

710 University Ave., Endwell

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Fritz Scheider

Winter was rough, cold, and snowy, early in coming and late in leaving. Dec saw 9-18 inches of snow from the last three days of Nov and introduced a bout of unrelenting cold (9.7 degrees/day lower than normal) and considerable cumulative ground snow (20 inches in excess). Beaver Lake froze by Dec 7, Oneida Lake by Dec 8 and snow at Oswego made national headlines and local winter-long trouble. Late Dec saw slight relief in a three-day thaw but Jan promptly negated this and added fresh insult, snow (48 inches), and cold. Feb had similar cold but normal snowfall; an extensive thaw occurred in the last week of Feb. Severe cold weather in the first half of Mar froze the flooded marshes *solid* and various creekside flooded areas, usually excellent for ducks, became masses of jammed and jumbled ice. The remainder of Mar saw more snow (twice the normal amount to add to a near-record total of 137 inches) and very gradual thawing with minimal flooding and little migration in effect. The spring flight to date (Mar 31) has been marked by discouraged ducks seeking open water, icterids seeking snow-free fields, and birders seeking Bluebirds; all of the above have been awarded with little of the sought.

Despite the very rugged winter, the number of wintering half-hardies was amazing. Perhaps the late Nov snow and/or the early Dec freezing and storms grounded many of this group or forced them to seek food and shelter for such a prolonged period that subsequent migratory activity was nil. Whatever the cause, the winter of '58-'59 will go down as an outstanding one for half-hardies, e.g. all three mimids, Long-billed Marsh and Winter Wrens, Myrtle Warbler, Killdeer. Christmas counts at Syracuse (66 species, Dec 21) and Oswego-Fulton (44 species, Jan 1) and Dr. Burt's weekly feeder surveys for Jan, Feb, and Mar gave proof to the presence, and in the latter case, to the persistence of many half-hardies. Also outstanding thru this season were 1) the winter finch flight which became progressively better thru Feb and Mar, 2) the numbers of wintering dabblers, and 3) a fair Northern Shrike flight. On the negative side were 1) poor counts of certain diving ducks (Canvasback, Redhead, Oldsquaw), 2) low tallies of wintering Buteos, and 3) an extremely meager "white-winged" gull flight.

Notable rarities for the season were Franklin's Gull, Goshawk, Black-backed Woodpecker, and Oregon Junco.

Loons-Ducks: No wintering Loons. Red-necked Grebe: singles at Oswego Harbor, Jan 18 and 25, and at Fulton, Mar 14. Horned Grebe: winter numbers down with a high of three at Oswego and of 31 on Skaneateles Lake. Pied-billed Grebe: two wintered at Fulton, **none** at Oswego; a grounded Pied-billed at Baldwinsville in the third week of Dec is reminiscent of the grounded grebes of Feb '58 and points to severe freezing to the north. Great Blue Heron: three wintering along Carpenter Brook west of Camillus, Jan 2-11; first migrants on Mar 15.

Canada Goose: up to 80 wintering at Howland's Island Game Management Area (HIGMA), feeding both in the breeding stock pens and in adjacent unharvested cornfields; arrival date is Mar 15, 125, Port Byron. Wintering Dabblers: higher counts of Black Duck and Mallard (2200 and 400, respectively) at HIGMA, probably due to the protection afforded from the protracted hunting season and to the winter-long feeding; in other areas (Oswego, Baldwinsville, Manlius) winter numbers had dropped considerably by mid-Jan, e.g. 337 and 48, respectively, at Oswego. Pintail: 14 wintering with the breeders at HIGMA; a male stayed at Oswego until Jan 1 but was either shot or forced out by ice conditions thereafter. Baldpate and Soverler: two and one, respectively, wintered at HIGMA. Wood Duck: wintering pairs at HIGMA and Manlius and a single male at Fulton.

Migrant Dabblers: Arrival dates are Gadwall, Mar 20, one near Texas; Green-winged Teal, Mar 15, one, HIGMA; Baldpate, Mar 15, five, Brewerton; Shoveler, Mar 28, one, Seneca River flats. Numbers of Baldpate and Green-winged Teal have been low to date; migrant Black Duck, Mallard, and Pintail totals in the 2000 plus range.

Ring-necked Duck: no wintering birds for the first time in eight years; this may be due to severe ice conditions or the late hunting season preventing these half-hardy ducks from finding and remaining in the available, sheltered open-water areas. Redhead and Canvasback: low tallies (peaks of 235 and 592 respectively in Jan) thru the winter with a steady rise in Canvasbacks at Brewerton from 35 in Feb to 2000 by mid-Mar. Greater Scaup: a collection of 7000 plus birds wintered at Minetto and in Oswego Harbor; Scaup showed only a slight Mar rise at Brewerton (cf. Canvasback). Common Golden-eye: large numbers thru Mar with a peak of 2500 on Oswego River, Mar 29. Bufflehead and Old-squaw: both scarce thru the winter (peak tallies of 69 and 153, respectively) with an increase in Buffleheads (120 on Mar 14) thru Mar and a strange absence of Old-squaws at Oswego from Feb 15 to Mar 29. Common Merganser: maximum winter count was 2500, about two-fifths of normal figures; no increase in numbers in mid-Mar to indicate returning migrants but Red-breasted Mergansers, scarce all winter at Oswego, had risen to 600 plus actively courting birds by Mar 28 at that place.

Hawks — Owls: Goshawks: singles reported at Three Rivers GMA, Dec 14; Syracuse, Dec 21; Oneida, Dec 28; and singles in small hawk flights on Feb 28 and Mar 29, Selkirk Shores State Park. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks: two to three each noted haunting (and hunting) feeders in Jan and Feb (Dr. Burt's feeder survey).

First spring hawk flight, mostly Red-tailed Hawks and Harriers, noted Feb 28 at Derby Hill near Texas (Scheider) and at Selkirk Shores State Park (Spofford). Red-tailed Hawk: wintering numbers poor with a maximum count of 11/day. Rough-legged Hawk: steady drop in wintering birds until the late Jan thaw; a brief increase to a peak of 10/day (Feb 7) in first half of Feb, then the bird became downright scarce (1-2/day) thru late Feb and Mar. Red-shouldered Hawk: an adult seen repeatedly from Dec 31 to Feb 13 near Baldwinsville (Mathis) is the latest overwintering here; arrival date is Feb 28. Harrier: just two thru the winter; eight on Feb 28 at Texas were obvious migrants. Peregrine: one seen in the Feb 28 flight (Spofford) is very early; a second noted migrating over Syracuse Mar 20.

Ring-necked Pheasant: steady fall in winter numbers with flocks still separated by sex in the first week of Mar. Killdeer: one attempting to winter at a pigsty near Tully, seen to Jan 11 (Propst). Woodcock and Wilson's Snipe: arrival dates are Mar 19 and 26, respectively, both near Euclid; active courtship evident thru last week in Mar but none in the two-day storm of Mar 27-28.

Glaucous, Iceland, and Kumlien's Gulls: irregularly reported as singles from Oswego River and Harbor area with totals of nine, two, and two, respectively (very poor); a first-year Glaucous at Syracuse on Dec 21 is an early "up-river" record. Herring and Ring-billed Gull: counts low thru Jan and Feb with peak counts of 8000 and 4000, respectively, at Oswego, Mar 14; Ring-billed Gulls increased steadily after Feb 22 (this flight is as indicative of spring as the Feb Crow flights) and by mid-Mar there were more Ring-billed than Herring Gulls at Brewerton (not true at Oswego) though the ice conditions had changed but little there. **Franklin's Gull:** an adult with nearly complete hood seen from Mar 15 (Spofford, Farnham) to Apr at Oswego Harbor is a Regional first and may be a spring state record.

Mourning Dove: wintered in numbers (50 plus) at Fayetteville and in smaller numbers (2-20) at HIGMA, Bridgeport, and Cicero Swamp. Screech Owl: either very active vocally or more of them this winter; up to eight along two miles of road at Camillus, Feb 16, and three to four in concert at various woodlots about Fayetteville and Euclid. Snowy Owl: only one reported, near Nobleboro, Herkimer Co. Dec 31 (Wilkins), no reports along Lake Ontario. Long-eared Owl: two active roosts, each with a minimum of five birds, found at Syracuse and Bridgeport; both deserted by Mar 2. Short-eared Owl: scarce all winter with one to three reported from known roosts and marshes. Sow-whet Owl: one reported Dec 8, HIGMA (Ernst) and two seen Mar 14-19 at Syracuse (Recher); the above dates probably represent the last of the fall flight and the onset of the spring return, respectively, since there were no mid-winter records.

Swifts — Shrikes: Belted Kingfisher: one noted on Dec 21; none later and no spring migrants by Mar 31.

Flicker: about six times the usual number of wintering birds with peak of eight on Dec 14 and 21 at Fayetteville; a female Flicker on Feb 7 is most unusual since heretofore winter birds have been males. Pileated Woodpecker: a total of five on the Oneida Christmas Count, Dec 28. Sapsucker: a male, Mar 15, Bridgeport (Griffin) is very early. Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers: the Syracuse Christmas Count netted 29 and 87 respectively, the Oneida Count 11 and 20 respectively; Burt's feeder survey showed a Hairy:Downy ratio of 77:151 for Jan, 84:158 for Feb, and 83:190 for Mar, roughly 1:2 thru the whole winter. Black-backed Woodpecker: a male observed Dec 21 in Thornden Park, Syracuse (Estoff, Propst) and a female seen in Oakwood Cemetery (Five blocks away), Syracuse, Feb 12-28, are notable; in every case, the birds were feeding by scaling bark from dying elm trees.

Phoebe: first arrival, Mar 11, Fayetteville is early and most exceptional in view of the local weather. Horned Lark: few winter birds with a good spring flight (up to 100/flock) from Feb 8 to Mar 20. Blue Jay: Burt's feeder survey showed 305, 342, and 135 for Jan, Feb, and Mar, respectively; surprisingly common (35-40 plus) in eastern central Herkimer Co, Feb 22, a date when very few Crows were present. Black-capped Chickadee: Burt's feeder survey showed a peak of 325 for Feb and a drop to 240 in Mar, a situation comparable to the Mar decline noted in the field. Red-breasted Nuthatch: scattered wintering individuals (20 plus) about equally divided between feeders and natural conditions; many noted in spruce groves in east central Herkimer Co. Feb 22. Brown Creeper: at least five reports of this species using suet feeders thru the winter.

Winter Wren: three on Syracuse Christmas Count and three singles in Jan; none in Feb. No Carolina Wrens. Long-billed Marsh Wren: one irregularly at a feeder in Syracuse thru the last week of Jan (fide Burt). Catbird: one wintered successfully, apparently entirely on natural foods at Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse (Peterson, Rusk). Brown Thrasher: one spent the winter at o DeWitt feeder (MacAndrews). Mockingbird: a single stayed at the Teall's feeder in Little Falls; Mr. Teall indicates this is a repeat performance as one, perhaps the same bird, wintered there in 1957-58. Robin: small numbers (one to 15) stayed over in various cedar swamps south and east (to Oneida) of Syracuse; first migrants on Mar 1. Hermit Thrush: last noted on Dec 4, Syracuse; first noted this spring Mar 29, Selkirk Shores State Park. Golden-crowned Kinglet: very scarce thru the entire period with no count above ten; no flight in the last week of Mar. Northern Shrike: a good flight (1-3/day with few immature birds, definitely not up to past three winters; high of seven, Dec 21; departure date Mar 20. Loggerhead Shrike: one, Mar 29, near Texas is the first of the season.

Vireos — Warblers: Myrtle Warbler: singles, found at Fulton and near Minetto on Jan 1 and 4, are most unusual in view of the 30 plus inches of snow gracing the ground then.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Meadowlarks: no wintering records, a condition directly attributable to the early, persistent, deep ground snow; hundreds grounded and forced to roadsides Mar 27-29 by five inch snowfall on Mar 27. Red-winged Blackbird, Grackle, Cowbird: counts of 18, 7 and 85, respectively, for Burt's Jan feeder survey, 113, 12 and 145, respectively, in Feb, and the Mar survey found all three icterids back by the 10,000s and frequenting feeders by the hundreds; especially surprising were the numbers of Cowbirds (40 plus) wintering in the snow-pelted snow belt of the Rome-Boonville oreo (Moy, Aspinwall). Rusty Blackbird: singles reported Dec 6, Lakeport and on Dec 21, Syracuse; none in Jan.

Cardinal: winter counts excellent with 59 on Syracuse Christmas Count; reported at Westernville, Rome, and up to six at Oneida; peak feeder survey tally 170 in Jan.

The entire winter finch flight is most confusing. Thru Dec, Jan, and early Feb large numbers of Evening Grosbeaks (thousands) and Tree Sparrows were noted with lesser numbers (dozens to 50) of Goldfinch, Pine Siskin, and White-winged Crossbill, very few Purple Finch, and Red Crossbill, and no Pine Grosbeak. Late Feb thru Mar saw a steady rise in all the previously reported winter finches except Evening Grosbeaks with a rapid increase in Siskins and Purple Finches. It is doubtful if this pattern reflects a return of more southerly wintering birds because of the dates involved and the rather poor finch flight last fall. This incursion was very likely from more northern wintering areas, a hypothesis strengthened by the presence of hundreds of Goldfinch, Siskin, and White-winged Crossbill with lesser numbers of Purple Finch and Red Crossbill with very few Evening Grosbeak in eastern Herkimer Co. (Wilmurt-Nobleboro area) Feb 22. What can not be determined at present is whether the above observation points to the source of the late winter incursion at Syracuse and Oneida or only to an earlier, i.e. further north, locality of a more widespread dispersal, perhaps secondary to exhaustion of available food supply. High tallies to date are Evening Grosbeak — 1960, Pine Siskin — 200, Purple Finch — 102, Goldfinch — 655, White-winged Crossbill — 152, and Red Crossbill — 27. Redpoll: a single on Dec 28, Oneida is the only winter report. Pine Grosbeak: only three reports, all late Feb and Mar; two males, Feb 23, Westernville (May), three females, Mar 20, Selkirk Shores State Park (Spofford), and a flock of 12, Mar 14-21, at Camden (Pratt). Towhee: three wintering birds, all in Dec at Syracuse.

Savannah Sparrow: one, Mar 28, north of Montezuma, Cayuga Co. is very early. Oregon Junco: a pair wintered thru at a feeder along the Oswego River north of Fulton, Feb 14 to Mar 14 (numerous observers). Slate-colored Junco: Dec numbers up considerably; a marked Feb drop (Jan 144, Feb 83) at feeders, paralleling field counts. White-crowned Sparrow: three individuals sighted, first winter records here; a single at port Ontario thru Dec (fide Evans), an adult at a feeder near Manlius Dec 21 (Gould), and one thru Jan at a feeder in Camden (Pratt). White-throated Song, and Swamp Sparrows: early winter counts up noticeably (3, 32, and 2 on Dec 21) but a sharp drop in all three (e.g. White-throats in Jan, 13; in Feb, 2), most marked in Song Sparrows, thru Jan and early Feb. Fox Sparrow: arrival date is Mar 11, Syracuse; small numbers to end of period but larger numbers (20 plus) are strictly an Apr phenomenon.

151 *Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8*

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

The winter of 1958-59 gave Watertown the heaviest snowfall in seven years and the greatest number of zero or lower temperature readings in ten years. In many places the snow that fell at the end of November was still on the ground on the first of April. The 110 inches of snow to March 21 was above normal and twice as much as a year ago.

In March the snow melted gradually, but by the end of the month there was snow on the ground in many places. Ice still covered all ponds and lakes and in most places the streams. During the winter mice did much damage to vegetation, and especially to the bark of small trees and shrubs.

John Belknap is preparing more detailed reports about two of the more unusual birds seen in this region this winter, the Varied Thrush and the Hawk Owl (Ed. — see field notes section, this issue).

Loons — Ducks: A Great Blue Heron was seen near Lowville Mar 23, and an American Bittern near Evans Mills Mar 30. There were no Canada Geese. Because so much of the water was frozen few ducks could be seen during the winter. In the few places where streams were free from ice Wood Ducks and Hooded Mergansers seemed plentiful the last of March.

Hawks — Owls: An adult male Goshawk was seen near Theresa Jan 31. There were several observations of Cooper's Hawks near Watertown in late Dec and early Jan. Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks remained in the region all winter. A Bobwhite was found dead in the southern part of this region in the middle of the winter. It is likely that this bird had escaped and died of starvation. Two Virginia Rails remained at Beaver Meadows near Watertown until Dec 20. There were few reports of owls. Snowy Owls were scarce and Belknap had only about six reports. A Hawk Owl was seen by several persons from Dec 11 to Jan 1. The first time I saw it it seemed unafraid and we were able to approach close enough to observe the bird well for several minutes. Allen reports a Barred Owl Mar 29 and a Short-eared Owl Mar 22. In late Mar a Long-eared Owl was shot near Watertown.

Woodpeckers — Sparrows: Belknap reports a Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker near Gouverneur Dec 27. He also says that Blue Jays were numerous all winter, but that Northern Shrikes were scarce. Five Bluebirds were noted in southern Jefferson County Mar 30. A Varied Thrush was collected in Watertown Dec 12, and the specimen is now in the State Museum, Albany. Gordon saw many Cedar Waxwings in February. In late December a Redwing appeared at a feeder in Watertown and remained most of the rest of the winter, and another was reported in Potsdam. Allen found three Cardinals Dec 3, and it is reported that Cardinals came frequently to a feeder in Watertown. Some Evening Grosbeaks appeared in Watertown in Dec, but they seemed very well fed and showed little interest in the sunflower seeds. However, by early Jan they were coming to feeders in large numbers. They have been reported in many places in this region and they must be at least as numerous as last winter. Gordon reports many Purple Finches in Feb. and Mar. There is only a single record of Pine Grosbeaks, seven on Mar 8 near Perch River Marsh. On Dec 26 there were about 40 White-winged Crossbills near E. Chase Mills, St. Lawrence County. A White-throated Sparrow came daily to a feeder in Watertown for several weeks (Elitharp) and Allen saw one Feb 14. Gordon and Mayhood found about 20 Lapland Longspurs near Dexter Dec 6.

173 Haley St., Watertown

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK - CHAMPLAIN

AGNES AMSTUTZ

From the first snowfall in the latter part of November up until the present time, this section of the Adirondacks has been buried in snow many feet deep. Blizzards, snowstorm after snowstorm, and sub-zero weather made up our winter. During January and February all records for zero weather and snowfall were broken. Yet, in spite of all this, we had more winter birds than we have had for many years! There was an abundance of spruce, hemlock, and pine cones. There was little open water at the end of the period.

For this summary I have no reports from the Lake Champlain region. I would appreciate notes from observers in that area, especially since spring migration is now at hand.

Loons — Shrikes: No waterfowl to report. Blue Jays seemed especially common this winter. It was a rare hike that did not produce at least one, and some stayed at the feeders all winter. Small flocks of Canada Jays were found in the woods around camps. Around in larger than usual numbers were the Red-breasted Nuthatches; there seemed to be more of them than the White-breasted. And on Valentine's Day there appeared three Robins. These stayed for two weeks, feeding on the berries growing in protected areas of our hospital grounds. They came in the winter's worst blizzard. Then none were seen until a few arrived on Mar. 15.

Our highlight of the winter was a Bohemian Waxwing. This bird came in with a group of Cedar Waxwings on Dec 17. The Cedar Waxwings left, but this fellow stayed around Mrs. Perron's feeder from then until Feb 7. There were mountain ash trees across the road from the feeder, and he fed on these. Raisins were provided, but he took none of them. This is the first time a Bohemian Waxwing has been reported in this immediate section.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Several Meadowlarks were seen from Mar 20 to 28. Redwings came in about Mar 28, but one woman in Tupper Lake had a Redwing at her feeder all winter long. Crackles and Cowbirds arrived Mar 15. From Dec 6 on we have had Evening Grosbeaks in flocks from 50 to 100 at feeding stations. The number began tapering off around Mar 1, but there were still quite a few around. Pine Grosbeaks were present in small flocks during January and February.

Pine Siskins and Goldfinches were around in large flocks from early Dec on, but Redpolls were not noted until the latter part of Feb. One could see flocks of these birds feeding along the roadsides. This has been a fine year for the White-winged Crossbill. These showed up about Dec 1. Many flocks fed upon the gravel and sand in the roads, and as a result there were many casualties. Dr. Kingsbury, on a trip from Tupper Lake to Saranac Lake, counted 25 dead birds. Only a few small flocks of Red Crossbills were occasionally seen. One or two Purple Finches made regular appearances at the feeders. It was not until the latter part of March that they came in larger numbers and even started singing.

Tree Sparrows were not as plentiful this year as in other years. The first Fox Sparrow put in an appearance on Mar 31. No Snow Buntings were seen in this immediate area.

I would like to point out that my address is not Tupper Lake, but rather Sunmount.
Veteran's Administration Hospital, Box 63, Sunmount

REGION 8 — MOHAWK - HUDSON

JAMES K. MERITT

The winter season provided no real extremes from a weather standpoint, but general cold seemed to persist for extended periods. And almost constant winds added to the discomfort. However, the season was one which did provide a good bit of interesting birding. There were late holdovers and early arrivals among the small land bird population. The spring waterfowl season got off to a good start, and the Barrow's Goldeneye was a feature of mid-winter trips to the central Hudson.

Evening Grosbeaks were present in good numbers throughout, and the other winter finches were represented to a lesser degree. Robins appeared in flocks beginning in mid-January, and Purple Finches early in March became more conspicuous than they have been for years.

Forty species were seen on the Schenectady Christmas Count; thirty-seven were at Troy, and thirty-five were at Chatham, with an additional ten species being recorded on near dates at the latter locality.

Loons — Ducks: Ten species of waterfowl were observed on the Christmas count at Troy on Dec 27 (Schenectady Bird Club), possibly a record. Of especial interest was a male Barrow's Goldeneye; this bird remained for the Federation waterfowl count on Jan 18 but was not seen thereafter. This marks the third winter in the last four that the Barrow's Goldeneye has been seen along the Hudson above Albany. I would doubt that there was any other spot in the state that could boast of such regularity. Also of note at Troy on Dec 27 were a Pintail, a Lesser Scaup, a White-winged Scoter, and four Red-breasted Mergansers. Six Red-breasted Mergansers were seen on the count at Chatham also on Dec 27 (Alan Devoe Bird Club).

Other mid-winter records of waterfowl were scarce, but there was a notable movement of these birds along the Hudson in late March. The Hudson below Albany provided poor pickings until Mar 27 although it was largely free of ice after early in the month. On the 27th a group of some 60 Snow Geese was seen at Ravena (Madison). Two days later about 28 of these birds — probably part of the original group — were seen at Schodack Landing (Foote). This is the first spring record of the Snow Goose locally in several years. Among the other waterfowl species seen on Mar 27 along the lower Hudson were six Pintail, eight Wood Ducks, 600 Lesser Scaup, and 50 Hooded Mergansers. About ten additional Hooded Mergansers were seen that day along the Hudson above Albany and on the Mohawk River

near Schenectady (Hallenbeck, Meritt). This may be a record count for this species in the area. A few Red-breasted Mergansers were also observed on Mar 29. Four American Widgeon were at Tomhannock Reservoir on Mar 26 (Austin).

Hawks — Owls: The period's only report of the Goshawk is of one at Schenectady on Dec 20 (SBC). There were several reports of Rough-legs, but the incursion of these birds this year was relatively light. Three were seen on several occasions in late January at Castleton (Cook), and one was seen at Nassau on Feb 3 in aerial combat with a Redtail (Turner). A partial albino Redtail was at Schenectady on Jan 14 (SBC). There were two or three reports of Turkey Vultures from the southern part of the region.

Ruffed Grouse and Ring-necked Pheasants were inexplicably scarce. A few Bobwhite were reported, all from Columbia County in the southern part of the region where they are resident (but uncommon and local). Two Common Snipe were seen near Meadowdale Marsh on Dec 20 (SBC) and one present at the same locality on Mar 1 (Hallenbeck, Meritt) leads to the speculation that the species might have wintered. Fourteen Great Black-backed Gulls were seen along the lower Hudson on Mar 29 (Foote), and there were other reports of individual or small groups. White-winged gulls were unreported this winter. A flock of about 25 Mourning Doves was at Gallupville on Feb 28 (Zimmer).

A Long-eared Owl was reported from Delmar in December, exact date unspecified (Cahalane). There were many reports of the Screech and Great Horned Owls and several of the Barred. On Jan 1 a Barn Owl was seen at Old Chatham (Reilly).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: No Three-toed Woodpeckers were observed in the region this winter, but the resident Pileated was quite frequently seen. There were quite a few March Phoebe reports from Columbia County (ADBC) and on from Niskayuna (Angst); this species was unreported locally in March of last year. Horned Larks were quite widely reported during February and March. The first Tree Swallows of the season were two at Old Chatham on Mar 29 (Reilly). Red-breasted Nuthatches were very scarce again this winter. One was seen on the Schenectady Christmas Count (SBC), and the species was at Albany on Jan 25 (Thomas). One was seen at Ghent on three occasions in March (Erlenback). I know of no other reports. Several Tufted Titmice were reported. On Feb 1 one was at a Catskill feeder (Feldhusen), and another was at a Delmar feeder for some time after Dec 4 (Pense). Still another was at an Old Chatham feeder on Mar 20 and 21 (fide Reilly), and a fourth feeder report comes from Niskayuna, also during March (fide Bartlett). Brown Creepers were present in good numbers, 13 being seen at Schenectady on Dec 27 (SBC). It was definitely a bad winter for Carolina Wrens, there being far fewer reports than normal. Several Winter Wrens were seen.

A Brown Thrasher was one of the highlights of the Schenectady Christmas Count. A few Robins were seen throughout the winter, and by mid-January flocks of 50 to 100 were reported from many areas. Such flockings continued in February. Their winter occurrence was a frequent subject of comment in newspaper columns. Late in March Bluebirds were reported in apparent normal numbers, unlike the spring of 1958. There were several reports of Northern Shrikes, and on Mar 31 a Loggerhead Shrike was carefully studied at the Albany Airport (Thomas).

Vireos — Sparrows: A lone Myrtle Warbler was near Chatham on Dec 16, and another was in the same area on Jan 14 (Radke). About ten were seen at Old Chatham late in March (Reilly). The Eastern Meadowlark was at Ghent on Dec 4 (Erlenback), at Schenectady on Dec 20 and Troy on Dec 27 (SBC), at Cropseyville on Feb 14 (Austin), and at Castleton on Feb 24 (Cook). The Redwinged Blackbird was also seen at Castleton on Feb 24.

It was again a good northern finch year. Evening Grosbeak flocks abounded, and anyone who put out sunflower seed had them. There were scattered reports of the Pine Grosbeak, principally from Columbia County in January and February (ADBC). A lone female was seen in Warren County on Feb 23 (Foote). There were a few reports of Pine Siskins and Redpolls, but the incursion of these birds this year was not comparable to some that have taken place in the past. A few Purple Finches were seen throughout the winter, but during February and March large flocks of these birds were commonly seen — at feeders and elsewhere. As one observer called it, it was a real explosion.

The Red Crossbill was reported from the Chatham area during the last part of December (ADBC) and again on Feb 22 and 23 (Reilly). On Mar 8 four White-winged Crossbills and three Red Crossbills were seen feeding along a roadside near the southern shore of Sacandaga Reservoir (Scott). The White-wings were singing. It is not often that one sees both species of Crossbill together. Cardinals were reported in good numbers, especially in the Mohawk Valley.

A Towhee was at Schenectady on Dec 20 (SBC), and another was at Chatham on Dec 27 (ADBC). No less than six were at Chatham on Jan 27 (LaPointe), and the species was reported continually there thereafter. A Vesper Sparrow was at a Nassau feeder on Jan 18 (Turner). Others were reported early in March from Columbia. From Feb 15 to 28 a Fox Sparrow was seen daily at a New Concord feeder (Radke) and most of the more frequent March reports of this species were of single birds. The wintering population of Slate-colored Juncos was down in the southern part of the area. An Oregon Junco put in an appearance at a West Sand Lake feeder in mid-January (Bordt). The bird was present there at least until the latter part of March and was seen by many observers. Snow Buntings were rather frequently and widely seen during January, February and March, with reports from Columbia, Greene, and Schoharie Counties as well as the capital district. Lapland Longspurs were again unrecorded.

16 *Ellen Lane, Scotia 2*

REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

FRED N. HOUGH

In this region we experienced a relatively open winter, smitten by a long run of cold spells that drove the frost deep into the barren ground. In spite of the constant cold there were no recordings of extreme sub-zero temperatures. In the lower elevations, at least, most of the winter snow was gained in March with up to a foot on the 12th and another 3-5 inches on the 27th, the latter topped with winter's last real chilly fling of 5 to 10 degrees above zero on the 29th. So spring came slowly, as was evidenced by the belated awakenings of the great chorus of Hylas which were, for the most part, unable to help initiate the return of spring in March by being kept in their cold winter beds longer than usual. Ungreeted as they were by the Hylas, many of the spring migrants arrived close to within normal limits.

Studies and general observations of the winter bird populations in our region showed a high number of lingering migrants from the fall migration and a low normality among most of the visitors coming from the north. Perhaps this status was best reflected in the tally of the various Christmas counts.

Loons — Ducks: With sharp eyes afield the few Red-necked Grebes that occurred in the Rockland-Westchester areas this season didn't have much of a chance in escaping detection. John and Margaret Kelly first reported one on Croton Lake, Westchester County on Dec 14, after which none were reported until mid-March when there were several reports. On March 12 William Russell saw a pair on the Cross River Reservoir, Westchester, and following this report subsequent observations were made on the Hudson River and Stillwell Lake, Rockland Co. (Ed Treacy) and Lake DeForest, Rockland (Mr. and Mrs. Frank Steffens). Others reporting this specie were Joseph Malone at Croton Point and Martin Breck and Ralph Odell at Muscoot Reservoir, Westchester. Bob Deed says that this bird used to be fairly regular before 1949.

An American Widgeon was added to the RAS Christmas count for the first time, indicating a scarcity of this duck in our region during winter. The arrival of ducks to our waters in March was concentrated toward the latter half of the month. The beautiful Green-winged Teal seldom favors us with numbers and only one observation was reported — a pair by Stanley Grierson at the Tri-Loba Hill Sanctuary near Katonah, Westchester. On Dec 3 Mr. and Mrs. Bob Deed saw a sizable raft of

Canvasbacks on the Hudson River at Stony Point, Rockland Co. and estimated about 1400 birds. In mid-March another large concentration was seen on the Hudson River near Kingston, Ulster Co. (Sam and Helen Hayes).

Hawks — Owls: The Turkey Vulture was first noted in the Ulster County area on Mar 4 (Dan Smiley). The wintering hawk numbers seemed about normal with the Red-tailed being most frequently reported. Mrs. George Little reports the finding of a Goshawk in the lower Putnam County area on Dec 27. Rough-legged Hawks were found in the New Paltz section of Ulster (Robert Pyle) and the Katonah section of Westchester (Wm. Russell). The Virginia Rail does not commonly stay in our region during the winter, and so the finding of one is bound to be a thrill. On Jan 18 one was discovered along the Hudson River at Crugers, Westchester, by members of the Saw Mill River Audubon Society field trip party and afforded them a pleasant surprise. Mr. and Mrs. John Kelly photographed a Virginia Rail at Croton Point, below Crugers, on Jan 27, probably the same bird. Two Killdeer were seen near Kripplebush, Ulster Co. on the rather late date of Dec 4 (Fred Hough). The March return of the Woodcock seemed to be a little better than usual. An Iceland Gull, down from the north, was observed about the Croton Point area by many during the winter. Of the Owl populations the Saw-whet was the only one to receive much mention and these reports came from Westchester. One was found in the town of Bedford by Philip Ranieri on Dec 19, and Stanley Grierson spotted one in the Todd Sanctuary, Katonah on Jan 7.

Swifts — Shrikes: The Woodpeckers made a good showing on many winter lists. Flickers remained throughout most of the region. On Dec 17 Ruth and Stanley Grierson observed near Katonah, Westchester a hybrid between the Yellow-shafted and Red-shafted Flickers. They noted the typical black mustache line of the Yellow-shafted and the underwing and tail pink of the Red-shafted. A Red-headed Woodpecker was seen near Alligerville, Ulster on Jan 18, (Sanford Cross). The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was up in numbers. An all-time high count of four was made in Rockland on the Christmas count. A female came to the feeding station of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Orbison in Mount Kisco, Westchester, from Nov. 26 to Dec 13. Another Sapsucker was found in Hurley, Ulster Co. on Jan 10 (H. and I. Dunbar et al). The Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker was again reported in northern Westchester (Mrs. George Little). Phoebe's started arriving in mid-March — the 18th at Katonah, Westchester (Wm. Russell); Mar 20 first noted in Rockland (Mrs. Wm. Irving) and on Mar 21 up in Ulster at Kripplebush (Mrs. Fred Hough). There was some indications that the Black-capped Chickadee population was in a low. There were a few reports on Red-breasted Nuthatches, from most counties, with the highest number (5 or 6) coming from Fahnestock Park, Westchester (Wm. Russell, Ralph Odell).

Carolina Wrens were found but no increases were noted. The Christmas count turned up two Long-billed Marsh Wrens in lower Rockland Co. (RAS). The Mockingbird put in another bid for its existence here in our cold winter climate. We know of at least three records: one Mocker remained about the New City, Rockland Co. nesting site; another wintered in Putnam Co. just north of Carmel (Mabel Little), and still another was seen up in Ulster Co. on Dec 30 near New Paltz by Dr. R. Pyle. The wintering Catbird number was up with reports coming from nearly all of the counties. Two Brown Thrashers were found by Henry and Ilse Dunbar near Alligerville, in Ulster Co. and represents the only winter record received. Last November many observers were noting the large number of Robins that were lingering behind and suspected that many would remain here to pass on-coming season. The predictions came true and Robin counts were high in all counties reporting. A few Hermit Thrushes were known to have wintered, probably normal. Most areas reported Bluebirds, but they were considered scarce. Both Kinglets were down in number as compared to some years. Cedar Waxwings were unusually abundant in Rockland Co. (Bob Deed et al).

Vireos — Warblers: On the late date of Dec 2 Wendy Shedd and Joyce Pistone found a dead Blackpoll Warbler in Bedford Village, Westchester, and turned it over to Stanley Grierson's study collection. Of late years more records have been coming Malone has given us a record for this winter. They found one on Croton Point, in on wintering Yellow-breasted Chats and careful observing by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Westchester, on Mar 15.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: A few Redwings arrived in the latter part of February. In March a partially albino Redwing arrived for the third time in a nesting site at the Tri-Loba Hill Sanctuary near Katonah, Westchester (Stan Grierson). The female Baltimore Oriole reported in Kingston, Ulster last fall was last seen on Dec 7 (Arthur Cragin). A female **Bullock's Oriole**, visitant from the west, was found many times during the winter visiting the feeding station of Herbert Jacoby and other stations in the neighborhood in Mt. Kisco, Westchester. It was carefully studied by several people. The Cardinal population remains high throughout the Region. A Dickcissel frequently visited the feeder of Betty Van Soosten in Hurley, Ulster Co. during the forepart of the season but disappeared in January. Another immature male Dickcissel was observed by Robert Hamerslag on Mar 15 at his feeder in Katonah, Westchester. Evening Grosbeaks did not winter in any great abundance. Purple Finches, on the other hand, were very numerous. The Pine Grosbeak was virtually non-existent in this region. Redpolls and Pine Siskins were generally scarce. A solitary White-winged Crossbill was found in Katonah, Westchester on Dec. 29 by Wm. Russell and was the only winter report. Numerous Towhees remained in our region to winter and were seen in Westchester, Rockland, Orange, Ulster and probably occurred in the other counties.

Eight Savannah Sparrows were tallied on the Rockland Audubon Society Christmas count on Dec 27. This is a record high. Ed Treacy had a Oregon Junco at his feeder in Highland Falls, Orange Co. on Mar 16. The lack of snow probably made the Tree Sparrows less conspicuous than otherwise. The Rockland Christmas count found another high in the 23 Field Sparrows observed on that day (Dec 27). Two Field Sparrows spent the winter in the vicinity of a feeder in Katonah, Westchester (Elizabeth Odell). White-throated Sparrows were at a winter high in the Hudson Valley. Even a few Fox Sparrows remained in our region. Three were observed up in Ulster during latter December, and there were two down in Rockland at the same time. Song Sparrows were generally common. Snow Buntings were notably absent.

Correction: The Purple Gallinule given on page 129 of **THE KINGBIRD**, vol. VIII, No. 4 should be Common Gallinule.

Accord 1

REGION 10 — MARINE

JOHN J. ELLIOTT

Low temperatures occurred in early winter and stayed throughout January with little snow. There were frequent strong northwest winds and in places ponds and bays were almost, if not completely, frozen over.

Down in winter population were both loons, Horned Grebes, Common and King Eiders, Rough-legged Hawks, Goldfinches, and Siskins. Almost entirely if not completely absent were both crossbills, Pine Grosbeaks, and Redpolls.

The waterfowl count was successful, with credit given to the fifty observers, many of whom year after year respond to this challenge of facing winter's coldest blasts. Similar to last year, maximum freeze-ups of the winter came on or about census time.

Outstanding was an adult Golden Eagle on January 3 at Manorville and an immature Golden Eagle circling nearby (G. Raynor). A Bald Eagle and a Great Horned Owl were also reported on the Central Suffolk Christmas census on December 26 (D. Puleston).

A good late winter flock of some 25-30 Lapland Longspurs was present in early March at Jamaica Bay Sanctuary and the much proclaimed European Redwing, present from February 21-25, was viewed, or searched for, by an estimated 300 people.

Loons — Ducks: Loon records came mostly from Montauk. There were no Red-necked Grebes on the waterfowl census this year, and no records came in until its appearance in March in several locations. Horned Grebes were far scarcer than last year. Down also in numbers were Great Blue and Black-crowned Night Herons. The Jan 17-25 Long Island and New York City waterfowl census, consisting of Region 10's efforts in the entire state count, showed a grand total of 110,614. This included 89,146 for Long Island and 21,468 for New York City (including Staten Island, Bronx, and extreme lower Westchester County, bordering Long Island Sound). Counts included loons, grebes, swans, geese, brant, ducks, and coot. Chris McKeever at Water Mill again had the largest concentration of Canada Geese (879). Regarding the Mute Swan, this year's 571 greatly exceeded last year's count of 311 and the 1957 total of 357. Of these 315 were found in the Shinnecock-Moriches Bays area.

Two Snow Geese this year compares to three in 1958, and there were three Wood Ducks to last year's two. Both Eiders were down in numbers in 1959, and the Horned Grebe which last year showed a total of 1,567 was only about one-third as common this year. American Widgeon were down almost 1,300 from the 1958 total of 4,792, but there were larger numbers of some fresh-water ducks, particularly Gadwall, Pintail, Shoveller, and Hooded Merganser, and among divers, Bufflehead and Scaup.

The 1959 count of 110,614 was second poorest of all five years of the census and, except for last year, the counts have been gradually decreasing from the 141,520 in 1956. Disparity came about principally in the reduced numbers of Scaup. Until 1958 the Black Duck was always second on the list of Long Island maximum totals but gave way to the White-winged Scoter in 1958 and 1959, both species being about equal in numbers for the last two years. The Red-breasted Merganser, a typical salt water or bay duck, subject to the extended hunting seasons of recent years, has suffered a rather steady decline with a reduction of over 25 percent from last year.

Most remarkable this year was the almost complete absence of the Ruddy Duck, with a meagre total of 66 (38 from Jamaica Bay) compared to 522 in 1958 and 437 in 1957. No matter what length the hunting season, the typical feral or semi-domestic Mallard maintains practically equal numbers with this year's count of 2,950 on Long Island and that of 2,941 in 1957, an increase of nine.

Previous to the census a King Eider put in an appearance at Atlantic Beach on Jan 12 (J. Bull). In late February the Harlequin Duck, missing in the census, was present in its old location near the Montauk Lake breakwater.

Hawks — Owls: Two Red-tailed Hawks and three Rough-legged Hawks were at Brookhaven on Dec 26 (Puleston). A Rough-legged Hawk was seen near a garbage dump at Greenridge, Staten Island, several times during the winter (H. Cleaves). There were no Gyrfalcons this winter. A Peregrine Falcon was at Jamaica Bay on Feb 28 (Baldwin Bird Club). Two Virginia Rails were at Brookhaven Dec 26, and a Common Gallinule was at Wantagh for a month or more. There were fairly good numbers of Common Snipe early in the winter, with six daily at Tackapausha Preserve (E. Morgan) and three wintering at Mt. Loretto, Staten Island (Cleaves). Thirty to thirty-five Purple Sandpipers were at the Jones Beach jetty in January. There were few reports on white-winged gulls. A second-year Glaucous was at Fresh Kills dump, S. I., on Jan 18 (Wolfarth); another Glaucous was at Jamaica Bay Sanctuary in late December (Whelan, Nielsen, Myerdielks), and one was at Marine Park fill from Jan 14 to 17 (Whelan). Bonaparte's were uncommon; individuals were in Massapequa and Meadowbrook in late December. A Little Gull was at Far Rockaway Feb 14 (J. Mayer). Quite unusual was a Lesser Black-backed Gull at Orient on Jan 8. According to Roy Latham it was standing on plowed land, was Herring Gull size, and had yellow legs and a back not as dark as a Great Black-backed Gull. Latham presumed it to be the British sub-species.

There were several Murre records. Two unidentified alcids and one Dovekie were at Montauk on Mar 1 (M. Levine, A. Penberthy). At Seaford on Mar 9 a Dovekie was found exhausted in a yard (Mrs. J. Carroll), taken to Tackapausha Preserve, fed minnows, and restored that day to Zach's Bay at Jones Beach (Elliott, Morgan).

Two Barn Owls and two Long-eared Owls were at Jones Beach on Feb 7 (O. Heck). Snowy Owl singles were at Orient on Jan 5 (Latham) and Spring Creek Feb 15 (Mayer), the only two records for the winter. There were several records of Long-eared Owls — Montauk, Orient, Jones Beach, Shelter Rock pines, and a maximum of six at Pelham Dec 30 (Heck). A Saw-whet Owl was at Shelter Rock pines Dec 27 (L. Garland); two were at Meadowbrook Dec 30 and two daily at Jones Beach in early February (Heck). Short-eared Owls were found principally around the Jamaica Bay area, but surfacing the Spring Creek region has eliminated the vegetation and driven them out of there, at least temporarily.

Swifts — Shrikes: A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Northport on Jan 10 was feeding on the ground with Robins on rotten apples (E. Mudge). The first Phoebe report was at Roosevelt on Mar 22 (C. Ward). Horned Larks were scarce this year around Orient (Latham), and there were no wintering Tree Swallow reports. There appeared to be less of a migration of Blue Jays off Long Island, but more found during the winter. The Lyman Langdon Audubon Society, in its 1957-58 Christmas census, listed 58; this Christmas, 240. There was also a slight increase in the number of Chickadees. Unusual was the record of a Brown-capped Chickadee at Montauk on Mar 1 (Levine, Penberthy). No Tufted Titmice were reported. Red-breasted Nuthatches, Creepers, Kinglets and Hermit Thrushes were scarce on Christmas counts and have been practically absent since. The Long-billed Marsh, however, was well represented on the Christmas counts. Four Carolina Wrens were on North Shore (L.L.A.S.), and two were at Seaford in February (Morgan).

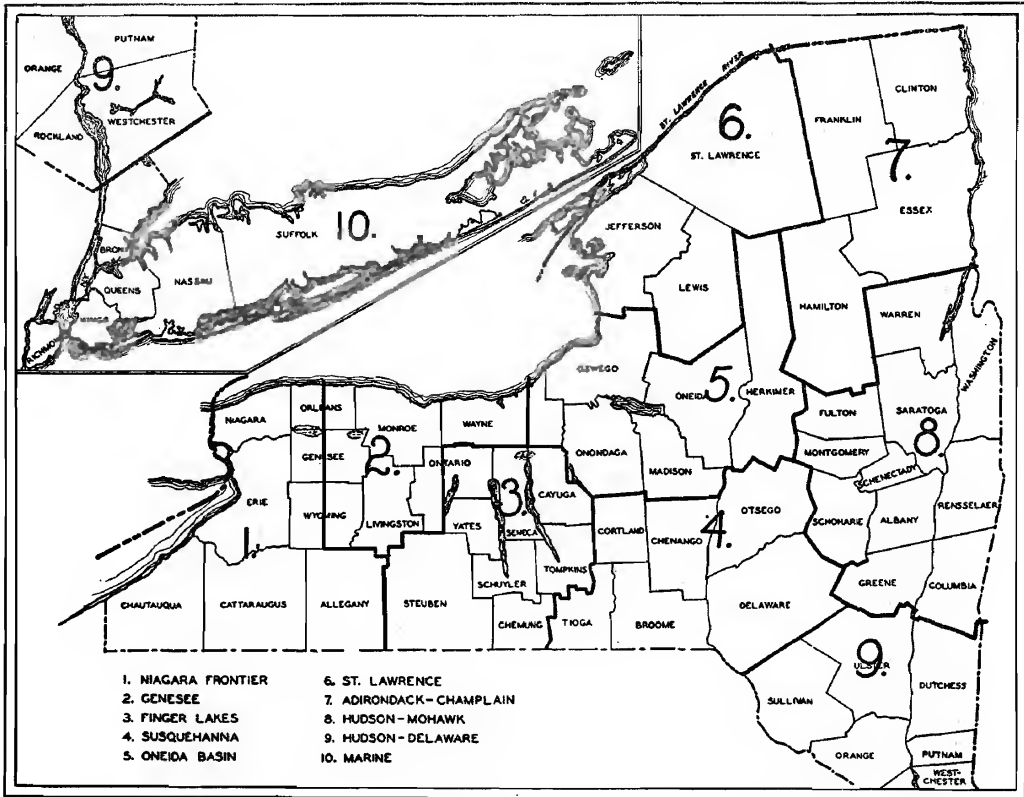
A Mockingbird was at Baldwin during February (E. Simon). Five Robins were at Babylon on Feb 20 (I. Alperin), and a Hermit Thrush was at Lawrence Jan 18 (Bull). A Northern Shrike was at Mecox on Jan 2 (Puleston, Raynor).

Vireos — Sparrows: An Orange-crowned Warbler was noted at Shinnecock on Jan 2 (Puleston, Raynor), and Myrtle Warblers were in regular numbers. A Chat was seen in mid-December at Amityville (D. Warren). Tremendous numbers of Cowbirds and quite a few Redwings were listed on the southern Nassau Christmas census. Cardinals were fairly numerous, with 42 being listed on the North Shore Christmas count. A half dozen flocks of Evening Grosbeaks showed up on Long Island during the winter, principally in eastern Long Island. House Finches ranged westward to Brooklyn borders and north to Port Washington, with a colony averaging 26 for several years at the latter place (Mrs. A. Dove). There were several records of the Ipswich Sparrow on Christmas censuses, but the old haunts at Gilgo were temporarily up-rooted and sand-drifted with the widening (to four lanes) of the Ocean Boulevard. Three Ipswich Sparrows were at Jamaica Bay Sanctuary during the winter, and four were reported at Spring Creek before present surfacing operations. Eight were recorded in early March at Jamaica Bay Sanctuary (Mayer, Rose), and one was at Quogue on Mar 25 (Puleston).

Seaside Sparrows wintered well to all appearances at Jamaica Bay Sanctuary, and on Feb 28 four came up into the top of the grass clumps for easy observation. The 25 to 30 Lapland Longspurs that were found at Jamaica Bay Sanctuary in late February and early March were occasionally accompanied by several Snow Buntings. A fair flight of the latter was found on western Long Island in early winter.

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